DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 406 257 SO 026 516

AUTHOR	Rank, Hugh
TITLE	Persuasion Analysis: A Companion to Composition.
REPORT NO	ISBN-0-943468-02-7
PUB DATE	88
NOTE	155p.
AVAILABLE FROM	Counter-Propaganda Press, Box 365, Park Forest, IL 60466.
PUB TYPE	Guides - Non-Classroom Use (055)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC07 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Advertising; Art Education; Communications; *Consumer Education; Content Analysis; *Critical Thinking; Evaluation Methods; Higher Education; *Language Arts; Mass Media; *Persuasive Discourse; Rhetoric; Secondary Education

ABSTRACT

Paying less attention to the traditionally taught rational, logical argument analysis format, this book focuses on analysis of the emotional, non-logical persuasive language and techniques often seen in television advertisements. In so doing, readers become more discerning consumers and hone their writing skills. Designed as both a self-study guide and as a companion to a composition course, this book contains comprehensive checklists for analyzing and creating persuasive compositions. (DQE)

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PERSUASION ANALYSIS

A Companion to Composition

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Hugh Rank

PERSUASION ANALYSIS
A Companion to Composition

Hugh Rank

The Counter-Propaganda Press
Park Forest, Illinois
1988

Copyright © 1988 by Hugh Rank
First Edition
Printed in the United States of America

Published by
The Counter-Propaganda Press
Box 365 Park Forest, Illinois 60466

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Rank, Hugh.
Persuasion analysis: a companion to composition/Hugh Rank.
p. cm.
Bibliography: p.
Includes index.
ISBN 0-943468-02-7 (pbk.): $10.00
1. Television advertising–Evaluation. 2. Advertising–Language.
3. Persuasion (Rhetoric) 4. Content analysis (Communication)
I. Title.
HF6146. T42R36 1988
659. 14'3–dc19

88-25696
CIP

Acknowledgments:This book was written by Hugh Rank as part of his work with the **National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) Committee on Public Doublespeak**, a teachers' committee organized in 1973 to "propose classroom techniques for preparing students to cope with commercial propaganda." <> Since then, Professor Rank has developed various materials in his course at **Governors State University** (Illinois) where his students have contributed greatly by their responses, comments, and advice. The author gratefully acknowledges the help of his colleagues and students, but claims full responsibility for the ideas and opinions expressed. <> Special thanks go to **Linda Van Dyke**, as editor, without whose help this book would not have been possible; and to **Margo Witkowsky** who helped convert the original Kaypro-2X manuscript to finished quality on the Macintosh-SE. <>**The Counter-Propaganda Press** is an independent small press dedicated to help the average person analyze better the common patterns of persuasion as used today by the sophisticated, organized persuaders, whether commercial or political, Left or Right, domestic or foreign.

> *"I know of no safe depository of the ultimate powers of the society but the people themselves; and if we think them not enlightened enough to exercise their control with a wholesome discretion, the remedy is not to take it from them, but to inform their discretion by education."*
>
> — Thomas Jefferson

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introduction

What's In It For Me?

Be self-centered as you read this: keep asking yourself, "What's in it for me? Your benefits should outweigh your cost — in time and effort — in order to justify a careful reading.

This book is going to change the way that you look at TV ads, shifting your attention away from **content** to focus on **form** : from **what** is being said, to **how**.

Ads are the best compositions of our age, skillful combinations of purposeful words and images. If you simply dismiss 30-second-spots on TV as trivial annoyances, they'll continue to annoy you, because they're not going to go away. But, if you accept them as highly crafted "units of persuasion" and learn a new way to analyze their predictable patterns, you can use them to your own advantage.

As a result of your efforts, you will get two major benefits: you will be better able **to analyze** any kind of persuasion (commercial, social, or political); and you will be better able **to compose** any kind of writing.

Advertising is one major focus here, especially those 30-second spots on TV. You've seen hundreds of thousands of these ads. According to the Gallup Poll, the average family watches TV about 7 hours a day. At 20 ads an hour, or 140 a day, we see 51,100 a year. By the time 6 year olds enter first grade, they've seen some 200,000 TV ads. To this, add radio commercials, magazine and newspaper ads, billboards, whatever. Without trying to get a precise estimate, this book simply assumes that you've seen a lot of ads.

Thus, your memory has a great store of available information, able to recall specific ads and plug them in to the principles and patterns presented here. This book will give you some exciting new tools by which you can re-sort and re-think a large body of your existing knowledge, some new ways to view ads in the future, and — perhaps most important to your immediate situation — principles of composition to apply to your own writing.

If you're like most people, you've been entertained and delighted with some ads, but annoyed with many others as being interruptive, or boring, or trivial, or stupid, or offensive. You've talked about "good" ads with your friends and you've complained about "bad" ones. You've probably discussed a whole range of issues about **deception** ("Is that true?"), **legality** ("Can they do that?"), **morality** ("Should they do that?"), **technique** ("How did they do that?"), **intent** ("Why did they do that?"), and **consequences** ("What happens when they do something like that?").

However, you've probably not analyzed ads, **systematically**, as units of persuasion. The odds are greatly against it, that in your own schooling you had any formal systematic training in such analysis. Nationwide, the situation still is that very few texts, very few teachers, and very few schools do anything about teaching students how to analyze this most common form of persuasion.

Teaching "English" usually means two things: the **composition** of exposition (from kindergarten ABCs to the 500 word essay in college) and the **analysis** of literature (fiction, poetry). Both of these studies have important goals, usually expressed in terms of individual competency and social utility, personal enrichment and cultural literacy. Schools need to teach all of these things, but also need to examine what kinds of language study have been neglected or omitted.

Persuasion analysis, for example, has been grossly neglected by the schools despite the fantastic growth and the increasing sophistication of the "professional persuaders" in the recent past. Advertising expenditures in the United States have grown from $18 billion in 1968 to over $120 billion in 1988. Some technological changes in this same period have been very visible (color TV, cable, satellites, VCRs), while other significant changes have not been so obvious: for example, the use of demographic research with computers to identify and to target audiences and their needs. Such targeting now allows many sophisticated persuaders (commercial, political, and religious) to be linked by means of telephones, direct mailings, and cable TV with very large audiences precisely identified and analyzed.

Yet, the schools continue, as if nothing's happening, doing very little to prepare students to analyze such persuasive messages. For example, when "argument" is taught in textbooks, the focus is usually on rational, logical argument, **not** on the emotional, non-logical persuasive techniques often seen in ads. Even though commercial advertising is the most commonly encountered persuasion in our society, less than 10% of high school English teachers surveyed responded that they do anything at all with advertising. Many of those who do "something" emphasize creativity ("Let's write an ad!") which usually becomes a random imitation, not a systematic analysis of the principles of persuasion. Furthermore, speech and media courses, which sometimes do teach some persuasion analysis, are under attack in many school districts as being "frills." Frequently, the introductory speech course in college is devoted primarily to student oral presentations, the "three minute speech." Not much attention is given to analyzing **advertising** as persuasion; even less is given to non-partisan analysis of **political persuasion.**

Because of this neglect, a serious new problem endangers our democratic society, an increasing **situation of inequality** between the few and the many, between the few elite professional persuaders and the many persuadees, the average citizens untrained in persuasion analysis.

People have always tried to persuade each other. Some people have always been more skillful, more able, more interested, or better trained than others. But, in the past, this natural inequality was limited. Only a rare person had the memory, intelligence, wit, and skills of strategy to be an effective persuader, and such abilities died with the person. Today, computers can store massive amounts of information, retrieve it instantly, and use it systematically. Such new tools, together with a concentration of money, media access, research abilities, and organized work teams are now available to the professional persuaders.

So what? "Advertising doesn't affect me," most people say. Year after year, this is the standard response of nearly 80% of those surveyed by one major ad agency. Such a denial, perhaps meant to boast about "thinking independently" or "being in control," actually shows a general unawareness of advertising's tremendous impact on all of us, as individuals and as a culture. Persuaders encourage such self-deception and flatter us on our independent choice and "good taste" — as we buy their products on which they have spent millions to shape that choice. We've become so accustomed to the ads around us, this unnoticed everyday "verbal environment," that we hardly realize its effects. Persuasion works best when it soothes, lulls, and goes unnoticed. Persuaders want response, not analysis.

Let me explain my own background as an English teacher (a literature and composition teacher) and as a "consumerist" and an "advocate," so you will understand my premises and purposes for writing this book.

Democracy depends, I believe, upon the informed choice of its citizens. Such informed choice, in turn, depends on a cluster of key concepts: free speech, a free press, an open society, and an educational system which prepares all citizens to understand and to evaluate ideas, information, and opinions. Persuasion analysis, as a form of such "critical thinking," needs to be taught to the widest possible audiences: not restricted to elite elective courses for the few, but incorporated within the classrooms, textbooks, and courses for the many.

Major curriculum changes are needed, I believe, in order to produce the largest number of citizens capable of analyzing sophisticated persuasion techniques, from persuaders of **all** sorts, commercial or political, Left or Right, foreign or domestic. Realistically, such major reforms involve a slow complex process, not soon in coming. But, without waiting for whole systems to change, we **can** do something right now, as individuals.

Over the past decade, I've written a dozen good teaching aids about commercial and political persuasion, one-page "freebies" designed to be photocopied (the people's printing press) by teachers and incorporated within existing courses. Now, this book, *Persuasion Analysis*, brings together my experience both as a persuasion analyst and also as a composition teacher. I want to show you how to transfer certain rhetorical principles so that you become both a better analyst and a better composer. Two birds with one stone. Synergy.

This book is not a hatchet job against advertising. The assumption here is that everyone in a free society has a right to try to persuade others. Nor do I see advertising as a conspiracy against the consumer. Nor is this a diatribe against deceptive advertising, hard-core fraud, or even borderline cases. But, this book tries to help counter-balance the growing imbalance between professional persuaders and the average person.

Advertising analysis is the best starting point for a better understanding of **all** persuasion. Ads are fairly easy to analyze, come in carefully crafted packages, are easily available in great quantity and variety, and are frequently interesting and entertaining. In contrast, most political persuasion we encounter is harder to analyze because it usually appears in bits and fragments, edited by others, and is intrinsically more complex than the typical simplicity of an ad. So, start with analyzing ads, but don't stop there.

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

This book is designed both for self-study and as a companion to a composition course. As a **self-study** book, it is primarily directed to college graduates who are out in the business world now and see the practical need for some way to upgrade their writing skills — quickly, easily, and conveniently — in their available time.

If you are currently taking a **composition course**, recognize that this may be one of the most important courses you'll ever take. Surveys of college graduates, years after they leave school, commonly indicate that most people look back on their composition course (which they were usually forced into) as being the "most helpful" or "most valuable" to them in later life. When graduates respond this way about their composition course, they're thinking of the important skills involved in organizing ideas coherently and communicating them clearly.

This book will help you to use your time well during the next few months. If you are a student, this brief period may be the last opportunity in which you'll have both an instructor and your peers focusing on the composition process. During this time, you're going to watch some TV anyhow and see hundreds of ads. Seize the day! You might as well take advantage of them to increase your understanding of composition principles during the very time when you can most easily talk to others about these ideas. It's an easy, interesting, and enjoyable way to focus on some useful principles and transferable skills.

Advertisers will provide the specific examples: over 43,000 new TV ads every year!

To analyze them, this book will give you some tools (models, analogies, vocabulary, principles, and directions). From your composition text and teacher, you'll get more. However, because so many different composition textbooks and approaches exist, this book will not be "in sync" with any specific text. From these sources, you should primarily seek not facts, but **methods**; not information, but **information-handling**.

Your job is to integrate all of this, to make the connections, to have an active mind, trying to relate specific examples to general principles, and vice versa. You also have to provide the desire and the effort, the will and the work. As you work, be especially aware of three things within your own mind: your sense of **attention**, **orientation**, and **alternation**.

Questions headlined throughout this book will prompt you to focus on a specific aspect of an ad or your own composition (**attention**). Then, you need to be conscious of what you are doing, and where you are in a wider context (**orientation**), and to be aware when you change your focus (**alternation**).

Think about your own thinking processes. You can choose to focus. You can choose to shift. You can do it better when you are more self-aware of your options and your choices. Advertisers may want you to focus on the content of an ad, but you can choose to focus on the form. For example, if you know the common and predictable patterns of ads, you can choose to focus on the structure of "the pitch," or pay attention to the elements of an "image building" strategy being targeted at a specific audience.

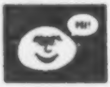
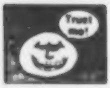
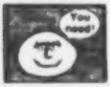
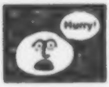
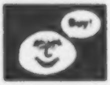
Are ads worth all this attention? No, but your mind is. If you can better learn how to analyze things, to recognize patterns, to sort out incoming information, to see the parts, the processes, the structure, the relationships within things so common in your everyday environment, then it's worth your effort. After all, you'll continue to see thousands of ads in the future. If you can use them to your own advantage, to help you become a better analyst and a better composer, then it's worth your time and attention.

For example, once you habitually look for the rhetorical structure of an ad, you'll transfer this to a greater awareness of structure of other compositions, whether it's your own writing, or the predictable patterns of TV newscasts and programs, or the traditional structures of lyric poetry. If you appreciate the craft of a well-made 30-second spot, you're more likely to enjoy the craft of a well-made sonnet or sestina. And, you're more likely to have a "sense of structure" in your own work.

Useful tools provided by this book include: (1) models; (2) analogies; (3) vocabulary; (4) principles; and (5) directions.

(1) **Models**. Good models, schemas, charts, summaries, and outlines help us learn whole chunks of information quickly by giving us an overview to see relationships. This kind of mental framework helps us deal with huge amounts of incoming information.

The main model in this book is that of "**the pitch**," my term for the basic five-part framework or super-structure, commonly implied in most ads. Here I've adapted some old traditional models (Cicero's classical oration and Aristotle's ethos) into an easy to remember 1-2-3-4-5 "fingertip formula," complete with cartoon balloons. More fully explained in Chapters 5 - 9, briefly here's the basic pattern of "the pitch":

	**1. HI**	**Attention-Getting**
	**2. TRUST ME**	**Confidence-Building**
	**3. YOU NEED**	**Desire-Stimulating**
	**4. HURRY**	**Urgency-Stressing**
	**5. BUY**	**Response-Seeking**

Other useful models for analyzing advertising and other kinds of persuasion (including political rhetoric and war propaganda) are introduced in the Appendix, as well as many lists and several quadrant graphs which gather information and organize it for quick visual perception.

(2) **Analogies**. Because analogies compare things from different categories, they are never exact. Yet, analogies are very useful ways to explain the unknown by the known, the uncommon by the common, or the difficult by the easy. Analogies often lead us to an almost intuitive understanding of a complex process because we can grasp the related ideas so quickly. A sports analogy, for example, about "practice" may be extremely useful to help some people grasp the idea that writing demands certain disciplined intellectual skills, just as basketball demands certain disciplined physical skills. Such skills can be developed by practice, good coaching, dedication, and so on.

Romantic myths about writing suggest that writers simply wait around for "inspiration," or that the Muse suddenly delivers ideas to them in neat little packages, or that writing is a haphazard, unplanned process. Thus, a house-building analogy, for example, about "planning" may be the way for some people to grasp the idea that the mental process involved in writing can be as organized and systematic as the putting-together process of physical things. A building contractor just doesn't wander around aimlessly, or work furiously putting up a wall here, or randomly installing a wire there. To build a house, a standard sequence of events has to take place: from designing the blueprints, to ordering the materials and parts in advance, to arranging for the right sequence of workers because some jobs have to be done before others. Such a concrete analogy about systematic "planning" might be clearer to some people than a similar, but abstract, analogy based on flow-charting, computer sub-routines, or business management.

(3) **Vocabulary**. We need words to describe not only the various parts of a thing, but also the parts of a process, an action , or a situation. For example, in basketball, it helps if we have a vocabulary to describe various intricate actions (head fake, lay up, slam dunk) and situations (one on one, full court press, stall). The more terms we know about something, the better able we are to talk about, or even to think about it. Notice how a good sports announcer can add a great deal to our understanding and enjoyment of a televised sports event simply by talking about what we are already seeing, by naming the actions and explaining the situations.

As you study composition and analysis, notice the words which help you understand the various aspects of both the product and the process. Observers often disagree about definitions and meanings of words. So you need both to increase our basic vocabulary in a subject matter (such as advertising, rhetoric, and composition) and to notice the variations of meanings as used by different analysts, texts, and teachers.

(4) **Principles**. Principles relate to the underlying concepts, the general guidelines, the basic axioms, the essential qualities, the characteristic behaviors of anything. Principles are often assumed or internalized, taken for granted and not mentioned. In football, for example, a basic **principle** is crossing the goal line to score; some basic **strategies** to achieve this would include a "passing" or a "running" game; some specific **tactics** might include a "quarterback sneak" play. Whenever dealing with abstract concepts, people can argue about definitions and borderlines: is an internalized "rule" (such as, "When in doubt, punt") a principle or a strategy? Is "good sportsmanship" a principle of football? So also with the variety of abstract principles relating to writing. Principles exist, but their names and numbers are debatable.

The first four chapters of this book deal with the more general principles (purpose, audience, limits, structure) applicable to all writing, before focusing more specifically with concepts more closely related to persuasion and advertising.

Many of the principles here are often assumed or internalized by writers: "everybody knows that." However, some of these principles (for example, about "target audience" or "limits") may be new to you: that is, you've never **consciously** paid attention to them, but once you read about them, you'll assent to them as being just "common sense."

While it's easy to measure and test a person's recall of specifics, it's hard to measure and test a person's grasp of principles. Yet, ultimately your goal should be to grasp basic concepts, to comprehend principles, and to apply methods, consciously and systematically, rather than unconsciously and haphazardly.

For example, as you watch TV ads, your mind should be actively engaged, by taking a specific ad and relating it to a general principle, or, by starting with a general principle and looking for it in a specific ad. What you seek is not so much the "right answer," but a sense of control, or, of conscious mental activity.

People who understand principles, unconsciously or intuitively, are often described as having a **knack** for doing things. Or they are described by such interesting sensual metaphors as having a "sense of structure" or "a feel for timing," or "a nose for news." We can develop our own skills and sensitivities by trying to grasp principles and applying them to specific situations. Analysis helps. Models help. People who understand the various parts of a process (the purpose, the overall structure, the sequence and relation of parts) are more likely to develop such a knack for doing things. Reflection helps. Practice helps.

Closely related to such a knack for doing things is an unconscious or intuitive **inference-making** ability. Some people are better able than others "to take a hint" or "to catch on" to a joke: that is, to understand partial or indirect messages, to see a part and to infer the rest, to understand the implications. Again, you can develop and increase your skills in inference-making by a conscious awareness of, and an attention to, various non-direct and non-literal ways of communicating. Most ads are rich with such implied, indirect messages. Advertising is the poetry of the corporation!

(5) **Directions**. In one sense, you don't need to grasp principles, as long as you can follow instructions. Such directions can range from very simple road signs, cooking recipes, and assembly instructions, to very complicated processes, contingency plans, and alternate scenarios. The military, for example, has an SOP (Standard Order of Procedure) for everything, absolutely everything, written out in thousands of Field Manuals, with detailed step-by-step instructions. People often criticize or joke about the excesses of "following the book" or "going by the numbers." But, in any large, complex organization, with new, untrained people always involved, it's necessary to be so detailed and specific in transmitting information.

Instructions in this book are given primarily in the set of 80 "prompter questions" directing your focus, and, within the text, as "hints" or often terse directives: "Classify. Observe. Find. Do this. Do that." Ideally, you'll grasp the principles being applied to the varying situations. If not, just follow instructions.

In brief, as you use this book, note the various useful tools to help your self-study: models, analogies, vocabulary, principles, and directions.

Thinking About Thinking

Shift your focus now away from the book and think about your own mental activity. As you analyze ads and compose your own writing, be more conscious and reflective about your own thinking processes. Be concerned especially with **attention**, **orientation**, and **alternation**.

We "think" all of the time, but much of our "inner speech" as we talk to ourselves, or that "stream of consciousness," the thoughts running through our mind all the time, tend to be random or even chaotic. Our mind often wanders away from our present tasks to daydreaming about the past or the future. Emotional feelings (such as desire, fear, grief, or anger) can overpower rational thought, or we can become obsessed with one thing taking up a disproportionate part of our consciousness. We can get distracted, get tired, lose interest, or have a short attention span.

Usually, we can get along in everyday routines and informal conversations by simple "small talk" (social-bonding pleasantries and cliches) and by exchanged narratives. We really don't have to organize our thoughts very often. Seldom do we have to do the sustained, focused, coherent, and systematic intellectual work as is needed in large tasks and abstract thinking.

Writing helps us to develop these intellectual skills: it forces us to focus attention, to plan, to organize, to structure, and to clarify the relationships among our ideas. Writing takes time and it demands a mental effort, uncommon in our daily routines.

Sometimes when people complain that they "don't like to write," they're reacting against this discipline which forces them to organize their thoughts. Or they may be unable to write well (because they've had so little practice or experience) and embarrassed or frustrated because of their inability. They feel they **should** have this knowledge or ability or discipline, but they don't. Consequently, they divert attention, procrastinate, make up excuses, or are afraid to say that writing is hard, or that they can't do it.

If you share some of these feelings, you should recognize that writing does demand an uncommon mental effort, because it is the process by which an active mind imposes order upon chaos.

Composition textbooks and courses usually concentrate on giving good advice about some common and important parts of this process: about comparison ("keep things parallel, emphasize similarities"); about classification ("don't cross-categorize") and division ("emphasize differences"); about definition, cause-and-effect and other relationships — all very useful bits of advice. In this book, however, I want to emphasize three mental processes usually not mentioned in composition texts: attention, orientation, and alternation.

Perhaps these are assumed to be so self-evident ("everybody knows that") that other authors seldom mention them. But, whether you use this book on a self-study basis, or in a course, I want to call these mental processes to your attention because I think you'll benefit here by thinking about your thinking processes.

Attention. Observe. Understand. Judge. In that order! Psychologist Carl Rogers alerted us that many of our problems in communication come from our tendency to judge **before** we understand, or even see what's out there. His principles apply here also. Whenever we analyze ads, **first** we have to observe, to pay attention, to focus in on, to attend to, to concentrate on, to read carefully, to listen closely, to watch intensely. However phrased, attention is primary.

First, we must look and listen, and observe closely what is said and shown. We don't always do this, yet it is the necessary first step. We've seen thousands of ads, for example, but without really paying attention to them.

After we focus attention, then we can attempt to understand by analysis: what are the parts and their purposes, how are the parts related to each other and to the whole, how does the item compare or contrast to others, in what categories does it belong, and so on. Headline questions on the following pages direct your attention to focus closely on 80 different aspects of ads and of your compositions.

Orientation. Orientation, as used here, means knowing where you are, and what you are doing: a self-awareness in time and space, of where any specific thing fits into a larger pattern, either of a class of related things or as part of a process.

Orientation implies that you know the parts of a thing or of a process. Orientation also implies that you have an overall sense of the whole, of "the big picture," even though you'll always be in a specific spot and working on a specific part. Whether you're analyzing an ad, or writing an essay, ideally you should have a sense of your goal, of the whole project, of the various parts, and of where you are in the overall process.

Orientation is a matter of degree. Most people have some sense of the territory, of where they are in the physical world. Yet, recent reports about the number of high school graduates who can not even identify "easy" items on a map (the 50 states, or the major nations of Europe) suggest that many people still need to increase their degree of such basic spatial orientation.

Temporal orientation may be even more troublesome because it is even more abstract. However, we do need a sense of time: of our own personal time, of a time-line of history, or some kind of historical perspective. We also need to have a sense of where we are in a process, from beginning to end.

Orientation often gets complex and confusing because we are always in flux and usually involved simultaneously in many different kinds of things and many different processes. Practically speaking, we learn by experience how to juggle our daily routine schedules so that we get things done. But, whenever we get involved in a new project, such as a major writing assignment, there are some things we can do to work more efficiently.

Before you start a project, orient yourself by advance preparation and planning. First, identify your overall purpose, then your immediate short-term goals: what parts have to be done, and in what sequence. Make a "map" — an outline, checklist or flow-chart. (In this book, the chapters provide a useful sequence, and their introductory "abstracts" provide an overview.)

After you finish any major part of the project, orient yourself by summarizing what you've done, and what needs to be done next. Again, use a checklist or an outline, make notes, or say it out loud to yourself, anything that keeps you aware of what you're doing. Lawyers, for example, keep "time logs" by the quarter-hour of their mental activity, a very intangible process, so they have some kind of record of it, for themselves and their clients, who get billed for it.

Alternation. Alternation, as used here, means a **conscious** awareness when you shift back and forth from a very "close-up" focus on a specific part (for example, writing a sentence, or focusing on one aspect of an ad) to a broad "wide angle" view of the whole. Normally, you shift your attention back and forth unconsciously, but it would often help if this alternation were a conscious one, so that you would have a greater sense of control, of knowing where you are, and what you are doing. But, commonly, several **problems** occur: you can be too specific, too general, or confused.

You can be **too specific**, always involved in the details. You can lose your perspective, lose sight of the whole, of the big picture, of the goal, of the wider context. You can be like the person who "can't see the forest because of the trees." This is a common problem, and very understandable, because you are often so busy paying attention to getting the details right. For example, when you are writing, you can sometimes spend so much effort working on one sentence or on one idea that you get distracted from an overall sense of where it fits into the whole.

You can be **too general**, relying on vague generalities and high-level abstractions (e.g. " democracy," "secular humanism," "company policy," or "neo-structuralism"), which may have intense personal meaning, but which are not clear to others unless you show what you mean by specific examples. Or you can write a long series of abstract sentences (each one true in itself) can accumulate and confuse a reader because the explanatory examples were left out.

You can be **confused**, or lack coherence by randomly shifting among the various parts, or unconsciously shifting from generalities to specifics, unaware of what you are doing. Often people will "just start writing" and work very hard, but their effort isn't directed or coherent. After a while, they "run out of steam," or "go in circles." (Problems so common, we have cliches for them.) When "free writing" is recommended by textbooks as a way of getting started, or breaking out of a "writer's block," it's usually assumed that such writing is just the first draft, needing later revision.

In good writing, there's usually an ebb and flow alternation between generalities and specifics. For example, you commonly may write a topic sentence and then follow it with a specific, concrete example to illustrate or clarify it. Although this may be habitual or unconscious now, pay more attention to this process as you compose. So also, when analyzing ads, try to be more aware when you apply a general principle to a specific ad, or when you see a specific ad as illustrating a general principle.

To recap: as you analyze ads or compose your own work, first pay **attention** (observing closely). Then, try to be more self-aware of your own mental processes of **orientation** (knowing where you are, what you are doing) and **alternation** (shifting focus).

"Facts do not organize themselves into concepts and theories just by being looked at."

Gunnar Myrdal

Practical Hints for Analyzing Ads:

- Recognize that a 30-second spot TV ad is a synthesis, the end product of a complex process in which scores of people (writers, researchers, psychologists, artists, camera crews, and so on) may have spent months putting together the details.

- Be patient and systematic. Analysis takes time to sort out all the things going on at once. We perceive these things simultaneously, but must discuss them sequentially. Use the 1-2-3-4-5 pattern of "the pitch" as a useful sequential pattern to organize your analysis and to aid your memory as you observe.

- Recognize "surface variations": in 30 seconds, a TV spot may have 40 quick-cut scenes of "good times" (happy people, sports fun, drinking cola); or 1 slow "tracking" scene of an old-fashioned sleigh ride through the woods, ending at home with "Season's Greetings" from some aerospace company; or a three-scene drama: a problem suffered by some "friend," a product/solution offered by a trusted "authority," and a final grateful smile from the relieved sufferer. But, the structure underneath is basically the same "pitch."

- Seek "dominant impressions." You can't analyze everything. Focus on what seems (to you) the most noticeable, interesting, or significant elements: for example, an intense "urgency" plea, or a strong "authority" figure. By relating your intuitive "dominant impression" to the overall pattern of "the pitch," your analysis can be systematic, yet flexible and appropriate to the situation.

- Observe closely what is explicitly said or shown; consider carefully what may be implied, suggested either by verbal or nonverbal means. Translate "indirect" messages. Much communication is indirect, or implied through metaphoric language, allusions, rhetorical questions, irony, nonverbals (gestures, facial expressions, voice tone), and visuals.

- Categorize, but don't "pigeonhole." Things may be in many categories at the same time. "Clusters" and "mixes" are common. Observers often disagree.

- Understand that advertising is basically persuasion, not information nor education. (And not coercion!) Recognize our own involvement in a mutual transaction.Persuaders are benefit-promisers, but we are benefit-seekers. Most ads relate to simple trade-offs of mutual benefits: consumers get a pleasure, producers a profit.

- Anticipate incoming information. Have some way to sort, some place to store. If you know common patterns, you can pick up cues from bits and fragments, recognize the situation, know the probable options, infer the rest, and even note the omissions. Some persuaders use these techniques (and some observers analyze them) consciously and systematically; others do so intuitively and haphazardly.

- Train yourself by first analyzing those "easy" ads which explicitly use the full sequence of "the pitch." Always check for this full sequence (which includes "urgency-stressing" and a specific "response-seeking"). When it does not appear, consider what may have been omitted, assumed, or implied. "Soft sell" ads and corporate "image building" ads are harder to analyze because less is said and more is implied.

- Practice. Analysis is a skill which can best be learned by doing it. It's one thing to agree, passively, with these ideas. It's another to analyze an ad, actively and systematically, with such a detailed 1-2-3-4-5 pattern of "the pitch." You've seen thousands of ads, but you've not taken them apart this way. After you've done it ten times, or fifty, you will be a much better analyst. So also, most people do very little writing at all. If you want to become a better writer, you have to practice. Frequently. Such exercises are not busy work. Learning by doing is important.

- Read this book in small segments, spaced out over many short sessions, focused on the separate topics. Read the individual chapters just before you plan to watch TV. Apply the general principles about that topic to the specific ad examples you see. Use the Word Lists to see the patterns of predictable words for various categories of products and services.

- Videotape, if possible. Replay in slow motion, freeze-frame, or backwards to focus on various parts. No one can "see" or "understand" everything during the "real time" 30 seconds while watching a TV ad. At best, you pick up a few impressions. In newspaper and magazine ads, circle "key" words, or use colored pens for notes.

- Use your library to get current statistics and information on advertising and FTC issues: *Advertising Age*, *Business Periodicals Index*, *New York Times Index*.

- Watch TV ads with others, if possible. Ask your family or friends to do this with you. Most people enjoy discussing ads, and this book is short and simple enough for anyone to follow. These are brief lessons, tightly written, information-rich, relatively jargon-free, and filled with common sense hints. Do it!

PURPOSE
PURPOSE
PURPOSE
PURPOSE

The more you know about the various issues about an ad's purpose, the better able you are to understand your own purposes in writing. <> The word "purpose" has multiple and ambiguous meanings. In this chapter, the first set of pages focuses on "purpose" as the **motivation of the individual,** both the writer who composes advertisements and the writer who composes exposition. <> The second set of pages focuses on "purpose" as the goal, or the **function of different kinds of writing:** persuasion, expression, and exposition. <> "Hidden purposes" (including **deception**) are then discussed, a controversial topic related to ads, but less so to expository writing. <> Finally, the focus is on the purpose of the **audience**: communication is a two-way transaction, with both senders and receivers. Because people are benefit seekers, they have purposes in attending to messages, better understood in terms of four categories (**protection, relief, acquisition, prevention**) easily seen in ads. <> The chief benefit which audiences usually seek from expository writing is clear, coherent, and accurate information, as a means, direct or indirect, to the end of these same categories.

ANALYZING
ANALYZING
ANALYZING

WHAT IS THE WRITER'S PURPOSE?

The personal motives of most advertising copywriters are very practical. They want to do their job well, to make a lot of money and to be successful: fame and fortune. <> Advertising is often a very high pressure job, with great risk and insecurity, in which many people burn out early. However, this business still attracts many talented people because advertising not only pays well, but also is fun and exciting, and often rewards hard work, talent, and creativity. So there are a great deal of personal benefits for the individual involved in writing ads. <> However, when criticized by outsiders, advertisers are more likely to defend themselves in altruistic terms: as providing great social benefits for others, keeping the economic system going and generating demand for products, thus providing new jobs, goods, and services. As Tom Lehrer once said, of another calling, "Doing well by doing good."

[To identify my own perspective: In this book, the "profit motive" is not condemned. Nor is free enterprise, free speech, or the American Way of Life.<> As a consumer advocate, I've criticized advertising, but always for limited and specific reasons: for certain deceptive and fraudulent ads; for products intrinsically harmful (cigarettes) or contributory to harmful consequences (junk food); or for ads targeted unfairly at audiences intrinsically vulnerable (young children). Such ads, I believe, need to be regulated in the public interest. However, most ads are truthful, fair, useful, and provide mutual benefits to consenting adults, buyer and seller. Making a profit is no sin, nor is writing good ad copy: a writer deserves rewards for hard work, wit, and ingenuity.]

COMPOSING
COMPOSING
COMPOSING

WHAT IS YOUR PURPOSE?

The personal motives of most expository writers are very practical. In school situations, for example, the writer wants to pass the course, get a good grade, graduate, and get a good job. Such writing is a means to an end, a practical preparation for the future. Surveys of college graduates, years afterward, usually show that people claim that their "most important" or their "most useful" college course was their English composition class, even though most students at the time were forced into taking it. <> Writing is a chore for most people. It's difficult, time-consuming, and often frustrating. True. It's not easy to write well, and, alas, few schools demand much writing or give much training in it. ($$$!) However, writing helps us to clarify our thinking. We all have vague ideas about many topics, but only when we have to put them in writing do we realize that our thinking is not always clear or coherent. <> The means (how to write) vary widely; many good composition textbooks exist, each suggesting different means. But, the ends are fairly common: good writing skills benefit both the individual and society. On an individual basis, if we are going to succeed in our own goals, commmunication skills will help us personally. On a global scale, if we are going to feed, house, and clothe several billion people on earth, we need effective businesses managed by competent people with good communication skills. <> Stamina and endurance are needed for any sustained effort. We know that physical skills need sustained effort and practice. Yet we often expect that intellectual skills are easy and effortless, or that we can just "sit down and write." Not true. Writing demands effort and practice over a long period. We need stamina and endurance, which in turn demand commitment, willpower, desire, and motivation. If you don't have them now, you have to get them. Period. Don't kid yourself. It's your responsibility.

ANALYZING ANALYZING ANALYZING

WHAT'S THE PURPOSE OF THE AD?

The purpose of an ad is persuasion: to persuade its target audience to respond in some way, to do something or to believe something, now or later. Most ads we see simply say, "Buy this." <> As a means to this end, ads might inform us or entertain us, but their basic purpose is to persuade us. Ads may win awards for being interesting or being artsy, but, if they don't sell the product, they don't achieve their purpose. <> Language is purposeful behavior, for survival and growth. Human communication is not empty chatter, random noises or meaningless marks.<> Scholars often identify three main purposes: **exposition, persuasion,** and **expression**. Exposition is usually topic-centered; persuasion is audience-centered; expression is often writer-centered. <> These ultimate purposes have great impact on writing. Exposition is concerned with information-transfer in which clarity, simplicity, and fixed denotative words are very desirable. Persuasion, unlike exposition, often seeks ambiguity, multiplicity, and suggestiveness in words to encourage audiences to add their own meanings and feelings. Unlike expressive literature (poetry and fiction) in which the writers may be primarily concerned with exhibiting their own personal feelings , persuasion is primarily concerned with manipulating the audience's feelings. Unlike poets, novelists, and some essayists,• who may sometimes disregard their audience's needs, persuaders are primarily concerned with the audience's needs, and with results. Persuasion is judged by effectiveness: does it work ?

• *Expressive writers, cunning linguists, oft eschew audio-centric pandering whether to open-mouthed cretins, addled adolescents, or somnolent sychophants, and can articulate polysyllabic profundities, phallic puns, libidinous litanies, yea, even sacrilegious soliloquies, unconstrained by easy-access egalitarianism.*

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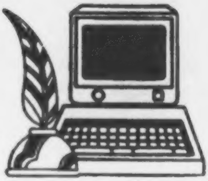
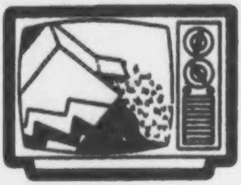


YOUR COMPOSITION'S PURPOSE?

In expository writing, the purpose is primarily to transfer information, clearly, coherently, and cogently. Thus, a memo or a well-written list can be "good" writing. In contrast, a poorly-written list might err in sequence or proportion, or contain unrelated trivia. But, in addition to basic information-transfer, much of our expository writing follows social conventions appropriate to the situation. <> Expressive literature (e.g. poetry, fiction) has different goals, is often more complex and subtle, and is endlessly debatable. Instructors sometimes ask for personal narratives, or informal essays, expressing your feelings or opinions. Such subjective essays are useful ways of loosening up, or getting over writer's block, or even helping self-discovery. But, in most expository writing, the focus is on the topic, not on the writer's self. <> Purpose also determines the writer's role. In expository writing, the writer is a reporter, a recorder, or a teacher (how to do it). In persuasion, the writer is a persuader, a peddler, or a preacher (what should be done). In expressive writing, the writer is a delighter, an entertainer, or a storyteller. (When the poet is didactic, then it's persuasion — with frills.) <> As a writer, ask yourself: What is the purpose of this writing ? To inform ? To persuade ? To entertain ? What effect do you want to have on the audience ? To increase their knowledge and understanding ? To move them to do something or to believe something ? To change them ? To entertain them ? <> Problems commonly occur when we have multiple and mixed goals. It helps to sort out our goals, list them, and set priorities. <> If you aren't sure about the purpose of a writing assignment, ask the person who assigned it.



ANALYZING
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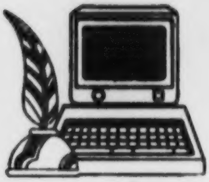
HAS THE AD A HIDDEN PURPOSE?

Most ads do **not** have hidden purposes; they simply sell a product or service. But, two big qualifications are needed: First, some common **psychological strategies** are used in ads, and many people object to them. In 1957, Vance Packard (in *The Hidden Persuaders*) publicized the shift in ads, away from a simple praise of the product, toward a psychological strategy emphasizing the consumer's needs and wants. Many of these persuasion techniques (such as "association") were not deep, dark secrets, then or now, but the average person was often unaware of them, and not trained in schools to analyze them. <> J.W.Key claimed that "subliminal seduction" was being used, that secret messages were being imbedded in ads (S-E-X in the ice cubes of whiskey ads) so that people responded to them, unaware that they had been secretly manipulated. Later, some religious groups charged that Satanic messages were secretly imbedded in rock and roll songs. Such secret-conspiracy theories always find some believers, but, if such techniques were really effective, both consumerists and cynical advertisers agree that everyone would be using them. Such focus on secret "mind control" not only implies our lack of responsible free will, but also diverts attention from the genuine issue: preparing the greatest number of people to recognize the commonly known and unsecret techniques of persuasion.

Secondly, corporate ads often do have hidden or **indirect** purposes. Also called "institutional ads" or "image ads," such ads from large corporations not selling a consumer product (e.g. oil and chemical companies, defense and space industries) are designed to make us "feel good" about the company. This multi-million dollar public relations campaign is intended to create a climate of "good will" or favorable public opinion, when the companies seek tax breaks, laws, or exemption from "red tape" regulations. Nor do corporations want the voting public to perceive them unfavorably, for example, as polluters or "middlemen," as war profiteers or "merchants of death." <> Promos for radio and TV stations (including ads, giveaways, and contests) also have indirect purposes: to lure audiences so they can increase their own ad rates.



DO YOU HAVE A HIDDEN PURPOSE?

Generally not. Usually, expository writers are simply trying to do a task, to convey information clearly and coherently. Much of our workaday writing has a very open and obvious purpose. <> However, sometimes people do have concealed goals, hidden agendas, secret reasons, or ulterior motives. ("Does he really mean that? ") Just as some teachers have a broader purpose when they assign political or social topics in order to get their students to pay attention to certain issues ("to raise consciousness"), so also do some students have hidden agendas in bringing into their essays their own political ideology, social concerns, or religious testimony. People do this for a variety of reasons: to persuade their teachers and peers; to show that they are on the "right side"; to curry favor (vocabulary quiz: look up - fawning, toady, obsequious, sycophant, brownie points); to provoke response; to "bear witness" to a Cause; or just plain "showing off." Sometimes we are unaware of our own subconscious motives, perhaps seeking attention, affection, or esteem. We may be naive or even self-deluded. It's easier for us to see this in other peoples' behavior. <> Check your own work (especially in controversial topics in which you are emotionally involved) to see if you have a "hidden agenda" or do any "special pleading." If in doubt, ask an outsider to read it for any emotional overtones suggested. But, to repeat the opening generalization: expository writers are usually trying to do the job of conveying information clearly and coherently.

ANALYZING ANALYZING ANALYZING

WHAT'S THE AUDIENCE'S PURPOSE?

All people are benefit-seekers: "What's in it for me?" Without denying altruism or mutual benefits, consider first this basic self-centered attitude. <> Persuasion is a transaction, a two-way process of both **benefit-promising** and **benefit-seeking**. To persuade others, we promise them benefits. <> No matter what we define as "good" and "bad," in terms of possession, we either "have" it, or "have-not" it. Using a simple four-part grid, we can sort out the broadest generalization about benefit-seeking in order to focus attention on the dynamics of four major human behaviors related to ads: **protection, relief, prevention,** and **acquisition**.

PROTECTION: If we have a "good," we want to keep it.	**RELIEF:** If we have a "bad," we want to get rid of it.
ACQUISITION: If we have-not a "good," we want to get it.	**PREVENTION:** If we have-not a "bad," we want to avoid it.

In advertising, for example, **protection** of our existing goods is the primary benefit offered by products for house care (soaps, cleansers), car care, investments, and so on. **Relief** is the primary benefit offered by medicines (painkillers, remedies). **Prevention** of future harm is the primary benefit promised by many health or safety items (auto tires, health clubs, etc.). Most ads, however, simply stress **acquisition** because there are so many "goods" available that people want — foods, clothing, furnishings, trinkets, toys, and entertainments. <> Observe and categorize TV or magazine ads into one or more kinds (protection, relief, prevention, acquisition). Multiple benefits are common, yet, you can label an ad by a "dominant impression." Note the specific products and services which belong in these categories. Observe or estimate: how many ads, how often, when and where they appear, the target audience.

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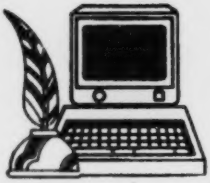

WHAT'S YOUR AUDIENCE'S PURPOSE?

People, as receivers, as an audience, seek benefits when they read, watch, or listen. Persuasion is the most obvious transaction. Expressive works (in books or movies) give us many benefits and pleasures: empathy, understanding ourselves and others, escape, diversion, curiosity, and enjoyment.<> From expository writing, the primary benefit we get is information. Information is the **means** by which we gain specific immediate benefits (e.g. directions, instructions, warnings) or general future benefits (general knowledge and understanding, historical perspective). We commonly assume that it is better to be informed than to be ignorant, that "knowledge is power." <> As an expository writer, your role is to provide your audience with good, accurate, clear, coherent, and useful information. If you give your audience inaccurate information, erroneous data, or wrong directions, you err. So also if you are wordy, clumsy, or repetitive. <> Information may be accurate, but, if not presented coherently, it's useless. Consider an unsorted box of computer print-outs which may contain accurate data, but of little use to anyone. As a writer, your job is to **compose — to put together** — clearly and coherently so your target audience can use it easily and benefit from it.<> In some classroom situations, your instructor becomes a "captive audience" who has to read what you write. However, in most situations, if you don't write well, or if you don't provide the expected benefits, your audience doesn't have to read your writing. They'll find someone else who can do the job better. <> Even though expository writing is primarily topic-centered (and doesn't have the obcessive concern with audience response that persuasion needs), it is still designed to be read by another person. What benefit is your reader seeking ?

AUDIENCE
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AUDIENCE

The more you recognize how much attention is given by advertisers to identify and to analyze their audiences, the more alert you will be as a writer with your own concern about the audience. <> Even though millions of other people may see TV ads, the advertiser usually directs an ad to a very specific **target audience**, the smaller segment or sub-group most likely to buy the product. Ads which might seem "stupid" to a spillover audience may be very "cost effective" with the target audience. <> In exposition, writing is much easier if you have a clear fix on your intended audience. Writing directed toward "anybody" or "everybody" often ends up being read by "nobody." <> All writers should be concerned with what their audience **already knows** about their topic: what needs to be explained, what can be assumed, or omitted; what vocabulary, examples, allusions, and authorities can be used. <> An audience's **feelings** (their emotional involvement or detachment) must also be considered. Ads often deal with deep desires, hopes and dreams, fears and nightmares. Ads should be analyzed not only for their information, but also for their emotional content.<> Other writers often deal with controversial topics which stir many emotional responses in an audience. Even when the writer seeks to be neutral, the audience may have pre-existing intense emotional feelings about the topic. <> **Feedback** is information returned from the audience, or others, which aids the writer in adjusting and revising in order to accomplish the writing goal. Commercial advertising spends billions on "consumer behavior" polls and surveys getting this feedback so that ads can be targeted better. <> Individual writers have a variety of feedback techniques, ranging from the writers's own imagination, to family, friends, and teachers.

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WHO IS THE TARGET AUDIENCE?

A specific **"target audience"** — as a sub-group within the much larger total audience covered by the mass media — is a concept emphasized by radio, TV, and advertising only during the past generation. When broadcasting first began, some seventy years ago, audience concern was very haphazard and naive. Most people thought that the function of radio and TV was to deliver information and entertainment to the public . However, broadcasters soon saw their function was **"to deliver audiences"** to the advertisers. As ad costs increased, sellers became more interested in avoiding the "waste" of broadcasting messages to people who were not potential buyers of their specific products. <> Two new strategies emerged. In one strategy ("narrowcasting"), advertisers used other media (esp. mailing lists and new channels on cable TV) to pinpoint audiences for specific items. However, the major "cost effective" strategy used by the radio and TV broadcasters was demographic research to identify their audiences more precisely: who was watching what program. The advertising industry now spends several billion dollars a year with various research companies (Nielsen, Roper, Arbitron, etc.) which attempt to identify or estimate audiences. Using sophisticated techniques (such as "peoplemeters" on TV sets) they are now better able to identify different segments of the audience (by age, sex, race, income, and spending patterns) related to when, where, and what they see and hear. <> Young children, as they watch TV, don't know that they are not the target audience for most ads; often they will complain about "stupid" ads which are really directed at other people within the total audience. Even some adults are equally egocentric or provincial because it's really hard for them to grasp the immensity and diversity of a viewing audience of 80 or 100 million people.

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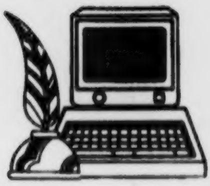

WHO IS YOUR TARGET AUDIENCE?

The mental concept that you have of your audience is going to influence what you say and how you say it: your tone toward the reader, attitude toward the topic, the choice of words, examples used, authorities cited, and the references and allusions made. <> If you have a clear and fixed idea of your audience, writing is much easier than if you have only a vague idea of your audience, or if you waver and keep shifting. <> Writing for "anybody" or "everybody" often ends up as writing for "nobody." Yet, there are only a few situations (such as personal letters, and some office memos) in which writers have absolute certainty about who is going to be the reader. Thus, writers usually have to imagine an audience, a mental activity which should begin early in the writing process and continue throughout. Keep asking yourself: **"What do I want to say ? To Whom ?"** <> In some work situations (e.g. writing instructions), it's fairly easy to identify the general kind of reader. Then, the next step is to specify what that reader knows and feels. <> In other writing situations, it's more difficult to imagine a reader. This often forces writers to examine their own motives and purposes. <> In classroom situations, some instructors will specify a target audience of peers, or of outsiders. If this doesn't occur, ask for clarification. If the instructor tells you to "write for me," recognize that you need to do a thoughtful audience analysis ("psyche out the prof"). <> Writers never know for sure about their audience, but they spend a great deal of time trying to imagine how the reader is going to respond: Will this be understood? Is this clear ? Is this the right word ?

ANALYZING ANALYZING ANALYZING

WHAT DO THEY KNOW?

After advertising research identifies the target audience, then the ad writer is concerned with that audience's **knowledge** about the specific product or service (not "knowledge" in general). Such information is usually obtained by various "consumer research" surveys, questionaires, or interviews. <> In relation to audience knowledge, consider the differences between the **new** and the **old.** <> **New** products and services can often be totally new inventions and discoveries, genuine innovations, which need explanations and demonstrations. Think about the vast number of new electronic products (calculators, computers, VCRs, CDs) in the past few years. The ad writer's job here is to explain and to demonstrate the purpose, procedures, and benefits of the new item: what it's for, how it's used, why it's worth the cost. Sometimes a new brand or new variety of an old product appears. In this case, the writer's task may be simply one of stressing "name recognition" by repetition. Constant repetition, in a blitz or saturation campaign, which simply associates a new name with something already known, is effective. The writer has to embed the unknown into that which is already known, and liked, by the audience. <> **Old** products and known services cause different problems for ad writers. In this situation, they have to attract attention and add interest — yet without boring or annoying people with constant long term repetition. Many advertised products are standards, old standbys. Notice how cleverly ad writers can sell the same old soap or soup.

COMPOSING
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WHAT DO THEY KNOW?

After you identify your intended audience as specifically as you can, then focus on the **common knowledge** that this audience shares with you. Think first about the shared "knowns," the "givens," the things you can leave out, and the basic assumptions. For example, we usually assume our audience speaks English, and lives in our culture. You don't want to insult your audience by explaining the obvious, or belaboring a point. <> If the writer is informed and prepared (after researching the topic), then the writer will have a "specialist" knowledge of the topic. The writer should then analyze the audience in terms of the degree of their knowledge about the topic. Are they **"specialists"** (knows a lot) or **"non-specialists"** (knows very little)? <> **Specialist** audiences are easier to analyze and write for because the writer knows what ideas need not be explained, and what examples and allusions can be used. Articles written for specialists spend much less time on general background material, and focus much more closely on small specific points treated in detail. <> **Non-specialist** audiences are harder to analyze and write for because if the writer explains too much, it seems patronizing or condescending. But, if the writer explains too little, it might be unclear. For a general non-specialist audience, the writer has to give much more attention to background and context, complex issues have to simplified, and definitions and explanations have to be made. <> About your audience, ask yourself: What's known to them? Unknown? What's old? New? What can I assume? What needs to be explained, or elaborated? What can be summarized, or omitted?

ANALYZING ANALYZING ANALYZING

HOW DO THEY FEEL?

Advertising writers know that audiences may have existing strong **feelings**, both positive and negative. <> Ads often relate to our deepest desires and feelings: not only our hopes and dreams (love, success, popularity), but also our fears and nightmares. Radio and TV are with us very closely and constantly in our homes and cars. The voices we hear and the faces we see in ads are carefully chosen to stir up appropriate emotional responses. Some audience research analysts use the terms "F factor" and "Q factor" to describe people who audiences are **familiar with** ("F") and those who audiences **like** ("Q"). For example, Hitler has a high "F" factor and a low "Q." Most ads try to use actors with high "Q" factors. <> In some "scare-and-sell" ads (tires, insurance) our fears are aroused by problems depicted. Then, solutions are offered: relief, if we use the product. Some ads (greeting cards, gifts, phone calls) are designed to trigger our nostalgia, memories, and strong emotional responses. However, most ads simply make us "feel good" about the product by using all kinds of pleasant associations with nature and beauty, family and friends, cute kids, and happy times. You'll see more smiles and happy faces in a few minutes of TV ads than in a few days of reality. <> Negative feelings also exist about advertising itself and ad writers have to consider these as they write. Not only is there a general distrust of advertising as being deceitful or manipulative, but also many people have strong feelings against specific product ads (feminine hygiene, toilet paper, laxatives, contraceptives). <> Ad writers are not expository writers seeking a neutral transfer of information. They are persuaders seeking response and very alert to the emotional situation of their audiences. <> Ads should be analyzed both for their informational content and for their emotional components. Be aware of how you **feel** about certain ads.

HOW DO THEY FEEL?

Whenever you deal with any controversial subject (any social, political, economic, or religious issue), remember that audience feelings pre-exist. Even though you may seek only to inform, as objectively as possible, you are still entering into an emotional situation in which readers may already have intense feelings. Don't ignore this reality, nor simply imagine yourself as the Voice of Reason, able to resolve the whole argument in a few well chosen words.<> Pre-existing attitudes and prejudices are powerful and hard to change. People often ignore, block out, or filter out the things they don't want to know. Whenever you enter into an ongoing controversy, even as a neutral, you cannot disregard the existing prejudices and antagonisms. <> As a writer, observe first how the differing groups in any controversy use words. Note their slanted language (the "God" words and the "devil" words), the key "code words" (phrases which seem to have special emotional connotations), and the variety of attack words (vulgarities, ethnic slurs, or any put-downs, such as "so-called"). Note also when advocates, on any side, are most strident and most self-righteous. <> In contrast, much expository writing deals with non-controversial topics. Here, writers encounter a different problem: the audience is often apathetic, passive, unconcerned, uninterested, lacks any feeling: " So what? Who cares?" In this situation, you may be dealing with something you believe to be significant, important, or meaningful. But your audience doesn't know or doesn't care about your topic. Here the writer's problem is how to stimulate interest in a passive audience without overtly becoming a persuader. <> When you analyze your audience, don't forget their feelings.

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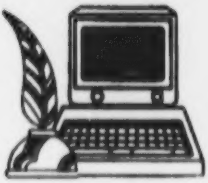
WHAT'S THE FEEDBACK?

Feedback is information received back from the target audience, or others, which helps the writer adjust the **means** to accomplish the **end**. Feedback implies a very dynamic process of writing, a process in which the writers recognize the need for revision. If we pay attention to the feedback, we find out what works and what doesn't. All of us do this informally, but the advertising industry has devoted a large portion of its budget and energy in determining the effectiveness of its persuasion. <> In one sense, the amount of products sold is the bottom line in any ad campaign. But, for most corporations, so many complex factors are involved in their overall marketing plan that a variety of ways are used to get earlier feedback. <> Test marketing, for example, is a method by which proposed national ad campaigns can be tried out, much more cheaply, by tests in a few small cities. <> Surveys, questionaires, interviews at shopping malls, opinion polls, coupons redeemed, and phone calls received are also important and common techniques for overall feedback on effectiveness. <> To get more specific comments, useful for ongoing revisions, several methods are used. Most TV commercials are tested out by "consumer behavior" and "market research" companies using in-depth interviews with small sample audiences. However, the oldest way of measuring the effectiveness of specific ad copy has always been in **direct mail** in which the ads are coded. <> The amount of time and money spent by advertisers on gathering feedback is a good indication of its importance in the process of persuasion.

COMPOSING COMPOSING COMPOSING



WHAT'S YOUR FEEDBACK ?

Most writers would like to get preliminary feedback from the ideal editor: a wise, kind, patient, and understanding expert who gives much praise and tactful constructive criticism. Alas, most writers make do without such a saint. <> Usually writers have to learn to be self-reliant, using their own imagination for feedback, playing both parts, as writer and reader. Reading your draft aloud helps, both for sound and sense, for strengths and weaknesses, to see if it's appropriate to the audience and situation. <> Students often get helpful feedback from teachers (in general, grades; more specific, in marginal comments and circled errors). Some composition courses stress group writing or peer editing in order to increase feedback. <> "You know ? You know ?" (a conversational speech habit, often condemned) is a common spontaneous, informal request for audience feedback, assent, or understanding. "Yeh, yeh" or "uh huh" (or a head nod) is the informal reply. <> Not all feedback comments we get from family and friends are equally useful: your mother might praise everything you write ("that's nice"); your friends may have a varying degree of skill, wit, tact, or interest; your teacher may be overworked. Textbooks also offer good advice and principles for you to check your work against. <> As a writer, you have to balance the usefulness of feedback against the dangers of dependency. Seek feedback from others, but don't be overly dependent on their opinions or approval. <> The ultimate feedback comes not from people helping to prepare the writer to accomplish a task, but from the target audiences. <> Paying attention to feedback, from the audience, from others, or even from your own imagined "inner speech" is an important part of the writing process.

LIMITS LIMITS LIMITS LIMITS

The more that you are aware of the limits imposed on ads and their writers, the better able you are to understand your own limits in the writing process. <> Every composer has certain basic limits — of available time and space, of money and materials — and often other technical and legal limits. Some limits are fixed, rigid, and absolute; others are flexible, loose, and relative. <> **Space limits** often determine the structure and inner organization of the whole. <> **Time limits** can relate both to the product itself (e.g. a 3 minute speech, or a 30-second spot) and to the composition process (the available preparation time). Writers must deal effectively with deadlines and time-planning. <> **Technical limits** will vary with the situation, but cost ($$$) is the major limit; composers always have to live within a budget. Ideas for TV ads are often limited by the cost of sets, locations, and costumes. In school and work situations, most writers cannot afford luxuries in equipment or services. **Mechanical limits** exist in the various machines which writers use: typewriters, copiers, or word processors. **Human limits** exist. People have varying physical and mental limits, abilities, and potencies. <> **Legal limits** on ads usually relate to buyer / seller issues (such as fraud and deception) or business issues (copyright, trade marks, brand names, libel). FTC regulations of ads often involve major ideological conflicts between conservatives and liberals. Legal issues are not as prominent in student writing, but problems can occur, including plagiarism, copyright violation, and libel.

ANALYZING ANALYZING ANALYZING

WHAT ARE THE SPACE LIMITS?

Space limits and measurements often determine the overall structure, layout, and design of ads. Consider both the two- dimensional (width & heighth) visual space of print ads and also the length, how many words of text or copy. Standard dimensions of magazines, billboards, matchbooks, or any print media determine typesize and image size of ads, thus the amount of information. <> Some limits are fixed, rigid, and absolute; others are loose, flexible, and relative. For example, the amount of advertising space in newspapers and magazines is very flexible; more pages can always be added, without getting complaints, if they get more ads. But, radio and TV time has absolute limits: you can't add 5 more minutes to an hour. When stations do try to cram in more ads, by using 10 and 15 second spots, both viewers and other advertisers complain about "clutter." <> All writers for the print media are very concerned with length. Newspaper reporters, for example, have severe space constraints because they never know how much space their editor will make available. Thus, journalistic style uses the "inverted pyramid" to load up the opening paragraphs with all the key details (who, what, when, where, why, how) and to put the lesser items in the later paragraphs, which the editor may cut off from the bottom. Brevity and information-rich openings are appropriate in such reporting. In contrast, this structure is not common in most expository writing which accumulates facts, examples, narratives, explanations and qualifications, building from premises to conclusions. Magazine editors, for example, usually specify length limits to their writers, then "save" such space. Book publishers also pay much attention to space limits because the most cost-effective way to print abook is in multiples of 32 pages.

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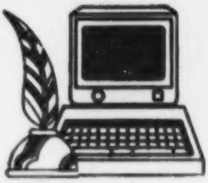

HOW MUCH SPACE DO YOU HAVE?

Length determines your overall structure. Once you know your space limits, you can start outlining and structuring. For example, if you know the size of your "typical" paragraph (and know that a paragraph is a cluster of sentences related to one idea), then you have a ballpark feeling for how many ideas you can treat. If you have to write a 1,000 word essay (and know that your paragraphs usually run 150-200 words), then you'll realize this means, roughly, 5 to 7 paragraphs. You could allow 1 paragraph for an opener. Then, using an appropriate pattern (e.g. comparison, contrast, classification) you could organize the rest as 3 sets of 2 paragraphs, or 2 sets of 3. <> Thus, a most important question for the writer to ask the editor, or the teacher, is **"How long?"** or **"How many words?"** or **"How many pages?"** <> Once you know these outside length limits (and your own paragraphing habits), then you can start **outlining** because you know how many paragraphs (ideas, or major chunks) you can handle. You may not have worked this way in the past. But, try it now. It's a useful organizer and time-saver. However, there is a danger if you write choppy, undeveloped 25 word "paragraphs" of 1 or 2 short sentences: you first need to learn how to develop adequate paragraphs. <> How precise should a word count be ? Usually a close approximation or estimate is adequate and appropriate. Remember the kids in grade school who would stop mid-sentence if they were told to write a 100 word essay? Some people are absolutists or literalists, seeking certitudes, rigid rules, and fixed limits. Such people are very difficult for most rhetoric teachers accustomed to giving "suggestions," "hints," and "guidelines."

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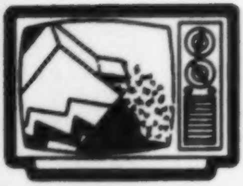
WHAT ARE THE TIME LIMITS?

Ad writers face two kinds of time limits: **"real time"** limits of the finished product (e.g. a 30-second spot), and the available **"working time"** of the composing process. <> 30-second spots are limited to about 75 words of copy and perhaps 50 visual shots, which can be presented in 30 real seconds. Fast talkers, or even speeded-up tapes, can increase this a bit. However, at some point, audiences cannot comprehend. Thus, writers cannot do elaborate essays, but must write very tightly, focused on a few key ideas, on words and images well chosen for their intended effects. Note also how most print-ads have relatively few words. Very few ads are straight copy, information or statistics, because audiences **also** have limits on the amount of time they will spend reading. <> Notice the pattern and timing of TV news interviews: the reporter does a brief "set-up" introductory, then a 30-second "bite" (in which the person interviewed says something), then the reporter repeats or summarizes. <> **Try this:** as you write, pretend you are going to be interviewed on TV and asked "What's your point? What are you trying to say?" Try to respond clearly and cogently, as if you had a fixed time limit of only a few seconds to communicate your key ideas. Write "cue cards" to prepare yourself. Don't ramble. Force yourself into a brief direct statement, without any qualifications, explanations, or examples. <> **"Working time"** is always limited. Deadlines exist. Advance planning is essential. Allow adequate "lead time" for possible delays, revisions, approvals, or a committee process. Ad agencies usually work months ahead of time preparing an ad. Large teams of expensive experts work long and hard to put together the few seconds we see so quickly. In TV, movie production, and advertising, writers are under constant time pressure (as in many businesses); the ones who survive learn to plan their time. Planning calendars, flow charts, and lists are very common aids for writers to specify, visualize, and remember time limits.

COMPOSING COMPOSING COMPOSING

HOW MUCH TIME DO YOU HAVE ?

No one has unlimited time to compose: neither with fixed "real time" limits (in-class essays, oral reports), nor with more flexible "preparation" time. Accept deadlines and the shortage of time. Don't waste time bemoaning our common fate. Learn to work more efficiently. <> For fixed "real time" writing situations, you must prepare, practice, and rehearse in advance: not just a vague, general study, but a very specific preparation, such as exact timing for oral reports, and possible structures (outlines, key words) for written essays. In-class essays often ramble if you don't take the first few minutes to outline and to decide on your overall structure and topic sentences. <> Commonly, there are two "time" problems: **time-planning** and **procrastination** — knowing what to do, and doing it. Many people brag: "I work best under pressure." Wrong. Failure rate is high during any urgency situation, but we have excuses! **Procrastination** is often the fear of failure: we don't know what to do, or how to do it, or where to start. It's better to do a quick outline, even if discarded later, than to sit there immobilized. <> **Time-planning** means a realistic estimate of your available time and your efficient use of it. Convert the rigid time limits controlled by others into your own more flexible limits, self-controlled, to give yourself leeway and options. For example, during the next ten days, you may have only a few small blocks of writing time actually available. Make a schedule or time-chart which visually shows your filled time-slots (classes, jobs, dates) and your free periods. Next, divide your overall writing goal into smaller "chunks" (outline, topic sentences, a paragraph, a scene) with your own series of deadlines. Know your own pace. Most people can sustain only a short period of intense thinking and writing. <> Know your own good times and bad times. (Mornings? Late night?) Writing demands concentration, and often silence and solitude. Know the quiet and noisy hours of your own locale, including the rush hours at the library, the photocopiers, and the computers. Anticipate delays. Allow time for revision, and time for rest.



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WHAT ARE THE TECHNICAL LIMITS?

Technical limits, as used here, mean the **money**, the **machines**, and the **human abilities** involved. <> Financial limits are important. Ads have to be "cost-effective." Many clever ideas are simply too costly to produce. Nobody has an unlimited budget. Cost affects "production values" (such as the quality of actors, sets, locations, costumes, and re-takes), and you can often tell a cheaply-made ad from an expensive one. <> Many technological limits are flexible, not fixed. Consider the rapid changes in photography (from black & white to color), in video, in computer graphics, in audio (from LPs to CDs), in all the electronics of the mass media. Costs, too, are relative: what is expensive today may be cheap tomorrow. <> Audiences pay more attention when common limits are stretched, or when something unusual or extraordinary occurs (e.g. a car atop a mountain peak, a trick camera shot, or new computer graphics). Inquiring minds ask, "How did they do that?" <> Although the people who write ads have their individual limitations, the industry, because it is so very competitive, tends to weed out the untalented. Clock-watchers and passive time-servers do not survive well in this business. It is not a "sheltered workshop" for the idle. Ad writers often have great abilities (smart, clever, and verbally fluent) and get well rewarded.

COMPOSING COMPOSING COMPOSING

YOUR TECHNICAL LIMITS?

Technical limits, as used here, refer to your **money**, your **machines**, and your **physical and mental abilities**. <> Money buys useful time-saving aids. In your planning, include the cost of supplies, machines, or even released time. Get used to working on a tight budget. Very few people or businesses have unlimited funds available. <> Although pencil and paper are all the tools you need to be a writer, most people today use some kind of machine — typewriters, word processors, dictating machines, and photocopiers — in their composing process. All machines have limits and inherent problems. Expect breakdowns and power failures, delays and waiting lines. Prepare for problems. Get adequate supplies of the basics (paper, pens, coins for the machines) and know the limits of your machines. <> Although we each have limits on our own physical and mental abilities, these limits may be the most flexible. Few people know their own limits because they haven't yet tested them. We're often too lazy to push ourselves, or too afraid that we'll fail. We stay within self-imposed limits because they are safe and comfortable. We often work far below our ability and our capacity. We need to encourage ourselves to stretch our limits. We can always learn, improve, change, and acquire new skills. Be open to change. Experiment. Find out what works best for you. <> Not only do we need a realistic assessment of our own situation, so that we are not condemned to wasted efforts and frustration, but also we need to believe in the possibility of heroism, of overcoming odds, of aiming for achievements beyond what others think we are capable of doing.

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WHAT ARE THE LEGAL LIMITS?

U.S. laws about advertising usually relate either to **buyer/seller** issues (including deception and fraud) or to **competitor** issues (copyright, trade mark, brand name, and libel). <> Historically, problems always existed between buyers and sellers: the ancient Roman slogan was "caveat emptor" (buyer beware) . But, during the early 20th century, hard-core fraudulent ads ("snake oil," "medicine show" claims, cancer cures) had increased so much that the legitimate business community got Congress in the 1920s to enact federal laws to prohibit "unfair and deceptive" ads, and to assign the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) to regulate them. Until the 1960s, the FTC focused on such hard-core fraud. Then, the "consumer movement" brought new laws and widened the scope of the FTC to protect consumers from some advertising abuses (including many "borderline" cases) of corporations. <> Today, most politicians agree that laws are needed against hard-core fraud. Conservatives, however, want fewer regulations of ads, trusting in the "free enterprise" marketplace to weed out bad ads and bad products. Liberals, in contrast, want more regulations (especially disclosure laws about health and safety issues) so that big government acts on behalf of the individual to counter-balance the growing sophistication and power of big corporate advertising. <> Scattered laws and regulators (FTC, FDA) operate today, and some self-regulation (NARB,BBB) is found within the ad industry, but no coherent overall plan exists because of the great ideological conflicts. <> To look up specific laws, or current controversies, see: *Advertising Age* (a reliable weekly trade newsmagazine), the New York Times Index, or Business Periodicals Index.

WHAT ARE YOUR LEGAL LIMITS?

Legal limits are usually not common problems in student writing, except for a few situations: **plagiarism**, **copyright violation**, and **libel**. <> Plagiarism is a common form of cheating: stealing the writing, using the words of another person without giving credit. The basic guideline is that you can use anything as long as you handle it correctly. Quotation marks should be used to indicate whenever the exact wording is used. Paraphrasing should summarize in your own words and sentence structure. Both quotes and paraphrases should cite the original author. "Common knowledge" doesn't need to be documented, but if you have any "borderline" worries, ask a teacher or a librarian. Be honest to your audience. Be fair to the original writer. <> Copyright laws are designed to protect the "intellectual property" of the creator from unauthorized commercial exploitation by others. "Fair use" provisions of the law allow all students and scholars to photocopy single copies of written work for their own research, but not multiple copies for re-sale.(The main copyright problems today relate to "pirate" videotapes, audiotapes, floppy discs, and photocopied reprints of texts.) <> Libel and slander laws protect the individual from attacks damaging one's reputation. Young people are often zealous in their criticism and attacks (for example, in student newspapers); sometimes reckless charges are made. Basic guideline: you insult people at your own risk. Even when legal, such *ad hominem* attacks are often rude, offensive, impolite, and impolitic. They often boomerang. <> Conflicts and contradictions will always exist in a democratic society which values diversity and free speech. We need to encourage a "civil tongue," to know how to disagree or criticize without invective, libel, or slander.

STRUCTURE STRUCTURE STRUCTURE STRUCTURE

The more we are aware of the structure, the overall form, of TV ads, the more we will recognize our own need to think early about the structure, the overall form, of our own written compositions. <> As we watch TV, we often focus primarily on content and storyline, without an awareness of form. In our own compositions, often we "just start writing" focused on the details of content and tactical concerns (word choice and sentence structure) without any attention to overall strategy, form, and structure. <> Within our culture, composers have developed many commonly-used **structures** which are useful, appropriate, and related to common purposes: form follows function. Models are helpful aids to learn about form. The "classical oration" is the traditional model of rational persuasion. Introduced here is a model (a five-part pattern, called **"the pitch"**) useful to analyze the non-rational persuasion of most ads. Later chapters will elaborate on the various parts of "the pitch." <> Large structures have parts, or sub-systems, which perform certain functions contributing to the whole. With experience, we can recognize the commonly used structures and their parts, and, with training and practice in "chunking" and outlining, we can ourselves use these structures more effectively. <> Developing a "sense of structure" is a transferable skill: the person who sees the structure of a 30-second spot is also able to see the structure of a story or a sonnet, and is apt to be a better composer. Many structural principles demonstrated in ads also apply to all compositions. <> **Emphasis**, either by placement or proportion, gives special importance to some parts of the whole. Emphasis can be varied, appropriate to the purpose and situation, thus allowing great diversity stemming from basic patterns. <> **Coherence** refers to the inner relation of parts, how well the parts are put together. Most ads are well crafted by expert writers: the end product of a careful composition process.

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WHAT IS THE BASIC STRUCTURE?

All compositions have a basic structure, an overall organization of parts, a form. Anything put together in an orderly fashion has a structure determined by its purpose: **form follows function**. In all human arts and crafts, people have developed many commonly used structures appropriate to certain situations and purposes. Predictable patterns exist. <> **Models** help us grasp large concepts and whole blocks of information quickly. For example, for 2,000 years in our culture, the model of the **"classical oration"** has been the basic format for composing the **rational** argument: the introduction, the thesis and division, the proofs (arguments pro & con), the summary and the plea. <> Yet, persuasion can be either rational (logical arguments) or non-rational, including emotional appeals and even — as Aristotle termed them — the "non-artistic" means such as force, violence, bribery, blackmail, and sexual favors. <> Commercial advertising is persuasion, but most ads are usually not rational arguments trying to convince us of validity. Ads often use non-rational techniques, such as emotional associations and "image building." Ads often suggest more than they explicitly state. <> To better understand this kind of persuasion, use this 5-part model called **"the pitch"** focusing on these key elements within most ads: (1) attention-getting;(2) confidence-building;(3) desire-stimulating; (4) urgency-stressing; and (5) response-seeking. <> Start looking for this pattern of "the pitch" to become more aware of this "invisible" structural framework implied underneath such non-rational persuasion. The rest of this book will explain these various parts in detail. For now, your attention should be on the overall structure: the **form** of ads, not their content.

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WHAT IS YOUR BASIC STRUCTURE?

Whenever you encounter a big writing task, it's normal to feel confused by the great amount of available information, by your own shifting focus, and by your many options. Structuring can be seen as a **transforming** process as you go from chaos to order, from the randomness of "inner speech" to the orderliness of the written word, from the massive amounts of available information and possible choices to those which are actually selected and used. <> When you write, you are either going to impose a structure (consciously or not) or be chaotic. Many people "get by" with an unconscious structuring, but this is really using general advice from their past without thinking if it's appropriate to the present purpose and situation. <> You can improve your control in writing by a conscious awareness and a deliberate choice of structure. You, as the writer, impose the structure on your material, but often select from among commonly used structures which are appropriate to certain purposes and situations. You don't have to start from zero. Just as we inherit the words in our language, so also we inherit the many common patterns which writers have used in the past. The "**classical oration**," used in rational argument, is one such pattern. Another one, commonly studied in literature classes, is the **basic pattern of narration** used in drama and fiction: the **introduction** (to the conflict), the **complication** (the incidents of movement, rising action, suspense as to which side will win), the **climax** (the resolution of the conflict), and, sometimes, the **denouement** (a brief wrap-up explanation). <> Composition textbooks offer many useful structures for expository writing. Texts will vary, stressing different ones, but the basic principles are the same: structure is very important, and "form follows function." <> However, as writers, we often get so involved in our **content,** or subject matter, that we ignore our **form**. Early in the process, we have to think structure!

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WHAT ARE THE MAIN PARTS?

Compositions are complex. They have parts or sub-systems put together to do various functions. <> When we see something, we usually notice either the whole or we focus on very small specific parts. However, with some deliberation, we can focus on the mid-range: the grouping or the clustering of the smaller elements into "chunks," or the major functional parts of the whole. <> We can learn these main parts through experience, but it's faster to use the principles, guidelines, and models developed by past composers. Literature classes, for example, usually teach the structural analysis of narrative fiction (novels or short stories) or of lyric poetry, which has a great variety of intricate structures (quatrains, sonnets, sestinas, terza rima, and so on). Media courses often analyze the structures and patterns of TV news programs, sit-coms, mystery and adventure programs (e.g."fight scenes" and "chase scenes"). Rhetoricians often analyze the format of political speeches and the structure of religious sermons (e.g. scriptural text, explication, doctrine).<> Sometimes structural analyses are not connected to our daily lives, but this book, by focusing your attention on the form of the ads you encounter everyday, will help to increase your "sense of structure" and to develop transferable skills. <> In the past, you may not have given much attention to structure. However, your present task is as a composer of written essays. Your future job is likely to be in a complex organization. Now is the time to pay more attention to both overall structure and the major parts. <> Observers can disagree when they analyze a whole into various chunks. Multiple categories can co-exist. For example, various observers may itemize different sub-systems of a car, a city, or a college. When you analyze and discuss ads, or the various parts of a composition, you should seek not so much to "get the right answer" (a single interpretation), but to develop sensitivity and skills. Make a conscious attempt to abstract, generalize, and group the constituent parts.

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WHAT ARE YOUR MAIN PARTS?

As a composer, as you write, you should know your overall structure, the function of the major parts, and your "location," that is, where you are in the process. You can do this better if you understand the concepts of an outline, a paragraph, and some of the commonly used patterns of organizing larger sections. <> **Outlines** organize and clarify your ideas. Use a "working" outline as a flexible framework. As you revise and become more organized, change your outline to show your new structure. Then use the outline as a blueprint, a guide, and a checklist to make sure you are following your own plan. <> A **paragraph** is a cluster of related sentences. The most common pattern is that of a "topic sentence" (the key idea stated in **abstract general** way) followed by a **specific concrete** example illustrating it. Another common pattern opens with a **generalization** which is followed by a **qualification** (but, on the other hand). <> **Larger sections** of an essay can be composed of several adjacent paragraphs clustered together by some relating principle, such as a narrative sequence. <> Two-part sorting patterns are common in some situations: question and answer, problem and solution, cause and effect, comparison and contrast, new and old, before and after, near and far, foreign and domestic, good and bad. <> Chronological sequence patterns are a common simple framework in story narratives and in instructions about a process ("first this ... then that"). However, when many actions happen simultaneously, writers need to devise special ways (cue words and transitions) to keep control and clarity. <> Description uses either obvious spatial patterns (top to bottom, left to right) or more subtle organizing patterns, such as mood or atmosphere. <> Longer writings often have a great mix and variety of structural patterns which writers select to impose order, and to avoid randomness and chaos.

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WHERE IS THE EMPHASIS?

Emphasis gives special importance to one element, either by **placement** or by **proportion**. <> Even though most ads have the same basic structural pattern, they are not clones, all looking alike. A great variety exists, partly because of the differing emphasis which can be given to the various parts, both of the form and content. Emphasis will vary according to the situation, the audience, and the purpose. For example, the content of different ads for the same automobile might emphasize "style" in one magazine and "safety" in another. The form might emphasize an "attention-getter" in one ad and a "confidence-builder" in another. <> **Placement** is important for emphasis, both in terms of the wider context of where an ad appears, and of the internal arrangement — where, within the ad itself, the various parts appear. Composers often disagree about the "best" place for emphasis. In linear sequences, some favor the opening, others favor the ending. In print ads, some claim "right hand" pages are better than "left hand" pages, or that "tops" are better than "bottoms." <> **Proportion** is the amount of space or time given to the various parts. Usually the part to be emphasized is given the most time and the most space. Some ads, for example, may make no product claims at all, but totally emphasize "confidence-builders" and devote the whole ad to make audiences "feel good" about the company. <> When you use the five-part pattern of "the pitch" as a model, it will alert you to the common predictable elements in an ad so that you can notice the varied emphasis, or even any omission, of these predictable parts.

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WHERE IS YOUR EMPHASIS?

Emphasis gives special importance to one element, either by **placement** or by **proportion**. <> At some point in your outlining and structuring process, in addition to what you want to say, you have to decide in what order ("What's first ? Next ? Last?") and in what degree :"How much attention should each part get ? " <> Some writers think in terms of plotting: "what information does my reader need next ? What do I have to supply ? What can I assume? " <> If you don't decide these things early, you tend to overwrite some parts, and underwrite others. This initial planning process is often difficult and time-consuming. But, once you do impose a structure and make these decisions about placement and proportion, then the rest of your writing moves much faster because you have a clear idea of what you are doing. Otherwise, you can get wordy (have overlong introductions, or anti-climactic endings) or accidently skip over important parts which need to be more fully developed. <> **Outlines** are necessary. They should clearly show the amount of space given to the various parts so that you get an overall perspective. Writers of TV ads and programs use "storyboards" — detailed outlines of both words and pictures — so that everyone involved can easily see where they are in the whole process. <> **Placement** decisions vary. Composers (texts and teachers) disagree about the "best" place for emphasis. Some favor the opening, while others favor the ending. Be appropriate to the situation. <> **Proportion** is the amount of space or time given to the various parts. Most writers agree that the part to be emphasized is given the most time or the most space. But other factors may be involved. For example, space may have to be used to fill in background information. Thus, decisions about proportion and degree ("more" or "less") should be related to the audience's knowledge. <> Emphasis can also be achieved by repetition, by repetition, by repetition, and, within the sentence, by **intensifying** words or punctuation!

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ARE THE PARTS COHERENT?

Coherence means that the parts are well put together. Most ads that you see are coherent, simply because they are the end product of a long process, composed by good writers, and carefully checked before release. Rarely do you see a poorly made ad from a national advertiser. (Sometimes local ads are poorly crafted.) Seldom do you even notice the coherence of effective ads because the flow is so smooth that the craft doesn't call attention to itself. <> Art is more coherent and has "less waste" than everyday reality which is filled with randomness, repetition, with bits and fragments which never cohere. When you see stories or ads on TV, you're seeing shaped, planned, crafted, ordered, and purposeful productions. <> To analyze details of cohesion, look for obvious "**pointer phrases**" used to emphasize things: "first, next, finally, most important." Note also the common "**cue words**," those various conjunctions and prepositions which link ideas together: "and, but, because, since, for example." <> Sometimes ads can omit all transitions and still be very clear and effective. For example, a typical "good times" ad for a soft drink might show 50 quick-cut scenes (smiling faces, beach fun, lovers, sunsets, pets, and kids) without any transitions, then simply end with the product's name or picture. Induction (a series of examples leading to a "conclusion") is the basic frame structure here. Such an ad can effectively convey its message if the images are well chosen. Such an ad could also be further analyzed in various ways: as an ad using the "association" technique, or as an attention-getter, a "feel good" ad, a "soft sell" and so on. <> Individual ads also can cohere, or fit into, a wider context as a smaller part of an ad campaign. For example, an automaker may target many audiences, using many different kinds of ads, within an overall campaign.

COMPOSING
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ARE YOUR PARTS COHERENT?

Coherence means that the parts are well put together. Not only should the parts be unified (all on the same topic), but also have a well constructed inner relation of part to part. As a writer, your job is to organize ideas well and to provide clear and easy cues so the reader can easily understand the relationship of the various ideas. <> Unlike ads, written by experts, many compositions written by novice writers are not coherent, and not well put together. Rambling off topic, or side-tracking, is a common fault, especially in poorly planned or hastily written essays. <> Incoherence is primarily a problem of overall structure and design. It can be remedied by planning and outlining. Paragraphs should be coherent both within themselves and among themselves. <> Another major cause of incoherent writing is the temptation to "use" all the research you've done or all the ideas you've had. Many people hate to "throw away" anything, so they keep adding odds and ends which are somewhat, but not quite, related to their topic. <> To a lesser degree, coherence problems can be caused by the omission or the careless misuse of "cue words." These prepositions and conjunctions function as the vital "directional signals" which link ideas together. Pay more attention to them, especially in the revision process. <> Coherence in long works (research papers, books) is a special problem even for very experienced writers who may spend weeks or months writing, a few hours a day. During such a long period, writers can lose focus, waver, and vary. Pronouns can change and verb tenses shift. Sometimes writers use different tones toward the reader or attitudes toward the subject. These items need to be checked during a final revision. <> **For coherence, you need a strong structure, clear topic sentences, obvious transitionals, and precise cue words.**

ATTENTION-GETTING
CONFIDENCE-BUILDING
DESIRE-STIMULATING
URGENCY-STRESSING
RESPONSE-SEEKING

The more you know about the attention-getting techniques used in advertising, the better prepared you are to select appropriate attention-getters for your own compositions. <> Attention-getters are most obvious and perhaps most needed in persuasion. Yet, informational or expository writing also competes for an audience, and often uses attention-getters to attract an audience. In some cases (such as instructions and warnings) simply getting the attention of the intended audience can be very crucial. Not all the attention-getters used in persuasion would be appropriate in exposition, but many **principles** can be usefully transferred. <> Advertisers are very aware of placing their messages in the right **context** to be noticed by the right audience, at the right time and place, and in the right mood. The expository writer is also concerned with seeking the context most conducive to lead an audience into the message. <> Ads use a variety of **ways** (such as news, questions, stories, and dramatizations) as a hook, a grabber, or a lure. Composition texts, using different terms, suggest many of the same ways for writing the "introduction" of expository writing. <> **Physical** attention-getters in ads are easy to recognize. Basic sensory signals, sights and sounds, are used by ads to attract attention. Less obvious is the care of expository writers to attract attention by visual strategies of attractive design, such as book and magazine covers, and page layouts. Most relevant to student writers is the needed care for clean copy, so as not to repel readers or distract attention away from the ideas by visual unattractiveness. <> **Emotional** appeals make up the content (not the form) of most ads and most persuasion, yet they are seldom used in expository writing. However, anytime a writer deals with any controversial topic, emotional associations (biased language, stacked arguments, logical fallacies) can creep in accidentally if the writer isn't careful.<> As a composer, you should recognize both the need to gain the attention of the audience, and the difficulties of decorum, of being **appropriate** to the purpose of expository writing.

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DOES THE CONTEXT HELP ?

Advertisers are very aware of the wider **context** in which their ads appear, as part of thousands of other **ads** all competing for attention. Ultimately, an effective ad has to get response. But first, an ad has to be heard or seen. Getting noticed, or getting through the clutter, is a very important step. You can't persuade if no one's listening or watching. <> Within advertising agencies, the "media buyers" try to select the right mix of media (magazines, radio, TV) to get the right audience, in the right time and place, in the right mood, most conducive to the message. Ideally, the audience should be "ready, willing, and able," a rare situation when you consider the complexities of mass audiences and many competing products. <> People don't watch TV to see the ads, but to see the programs. People don't buy magazines for the ads, but for the articles. Although the public may see the role of television as providing entertainment to the public, television executives see their business as **delivering audiences** to the advertisers. The function of TV programs (dramas, news, sports, cartoons, sitcoms, music, whatever) is to attract an audience so that they can receive "the pitch." Thus, any single program, such as the Superbowl, or any popular series which can deliver a very large audience, can sell 30 seconds of ad time for a great deal of money. This is the **most important**, fundamental concept to understand commercial television. Yet, many people do not grasp it: witness the constant complaining about "too many commercials" or "too many interruptions" as if the program's primary function were to entertain them, rather than to deliver **them**, in large batches, to the persuaders. <> Consider the close parallels between modern TV advertising and the 19th century "medicine show" which was a free entertainment show of magic, music, and comedians — all to attract an audience and set them up in a good mood for the "pitchman" to sell his wares. <> Magazines in the past used to be created by people who were passionately interested in the subject matter. Recently, magazines have been created by a new breed of publishers who act as go-betweens, first finding affluent audiences to deliver to advertisers, then looking for a lure.

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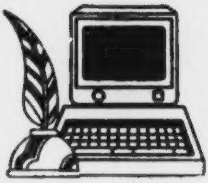

DOES YOUR CONTEXT HELP?

Do all that you can do to attract readers, to make your work accessible, and to make it easy for people to see your work. Don't expect readers to seek you out. In your role as a writer, you often have to seek out readers. In your role as a reader, conversely, you often have to filter out the writers. No one can read everything. If you read a book a day, you'd hardly make a dent on the list of the 60,000 new books published every year, or the millions already in print. And all of this before computers and the electronic "information explosion"! Whether you marvel at — or complain about — such an information overload, as a writer, somehow you have to deal with it. So target your audience as well you can, and do what you can to attract them. Make it easy. Be conducive. Help lead them in. Some contexts and situations help make the audience to be more favorably disposed to the message. <> In many school and job situations, when you're writing for a "captive audience," you may not need to attract their attention. But, treat them well: don't be late, tardy, or miss deadlines. This isn't conducive to putting anyone in a good mood. Sometimes people are so ego-centered ("I'll do what I want, when I want to.") that they don't realize that other people (teachers or bosses) are busy too, and appreciate prompt or early work. <> Avoid inappropriate times and places to inform or persuade. If your audience isn't in the right mood and the right context, your message may fall on deaf ears. <> Seek out the right places to publish your writing. Magazine and journal editors frequently complain that many writers submit manuscripts to them which are totally inappropriate, as if the writers had never even looked at the magazine to get a "feel" for the kind of subject matter, approach, and audience. After all the effort you put into your writing, place it in the best possible context where it is likely to be read and appreciated.

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WHAT IS THE MAIN STRATEGY?

What's the grabber? The hook? The lure? Here are ten common ways ads get attention: 1. **News.** Many ads are simply announcements providing information about new products, availability, and price. 2. **Lists & Displays.** People like to read lists, especially in rank-order, such as "5 Best Buys." Displays and catalogs are very popular, showing the many items, choices, and varieties. 3. **Claims & Promises.** A claim asserts that the product is something, has some quality, or does something; a promise means that it will benefit the buyer. 4. **Advice.** People often seek advice. Even those who rebel against "orders," often welcome "hints" and "suggestions." Two simple words (" how to") are very effective attention-getters. 5. **Lead-ins.** Some language patterns prompt completion or closure: a teaser, a fragment, an interruption, a quick peek, or a come-on. For example, the movies advertise "coming attractions" with film-clips of tension, "cliff-hangers," designed to leave us in suspense and wanting to see more. Other obvious lead-ins are congratulatory phrases ("Congratulations, you've just won...") or even the simple word "Wanted" used in a bold headline. More subtle lead-ins include periodic sentences (in which the full meaning is withheld until the end); premise indicators ("since, because") which lead to conclusion indicators ("thus, therefore"); and hypotheticals ("if...then"). 6. **Questions.** The most common and obvious lead-in is the rhetorical question, which does not expect an audible outward response, but does seek to prompt a silent inner response. 7. **Stories.** TV ads are often brief, dramatized problem /solution stories. The characters act as role models providing examples of behavior, either in realistic settings ("plain folks" — housekeeping, local bars) or non-realistic settings ("beautiful people" — elegant parties, yachts) which are romanticized wish-fulfillment fantasies. 8. **Demonstrations.** Four major kinds explain or illustrate how things work: a step-by-step sequence to show how to use a new product; a before-and-after set to show effects or results; a side-by-side comparison to show one is better; a behind-the-scenes revelation to show how or why the product was made. 9. **Breaking Rules.** Deviation from any rule, norm, custom, or standard gets attention; for example, some ads use deliberate misspellings and "bad grammar." 10. **Humor.** Light-hearted, mellow humor (not biting satire) is often used both to get attention and to stir up good feelings.

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WHAT IS YOUR MAIN STRATEGY?

Strategically, you need to be aware of the value of attention-getting and the function of your introduction. Tactically, you probably should not start by trying to write the specific opening sentence. First, concentrate on your thesis (what you want to say) and the overall structure. Eventually you're going to have to write an introduction (including the important opening sentence and opening paragraph), but it's much easier if you know what the whole is going to be. <> It's also easier to write an introduction if you know some of the **common options available**, or ways that other writers have used in the past.<> In classical rhetoric, the exordium (the introduction, the opening, the beginning) had two main functions: to lead the audience into the discussion, and to ingratiate the writer with the audience. <> Composition texts today, as their basic source for a variety of openings, often use Whately's categories (1828): Introduction Inquisitive, Paradoxical, Corrective, Preparatory, and Narrative. These useful guidelines are often repeated in texts and frequently used by writers: **use a question** (as a lead-in to the answer); **use a paradox** (a seeming contradiction which needs to be explained) or a **cryptic statement** (something unusual provoking curiosity); **correct a misunderstanding** or a false impression; **present a scene** (a visual concrete description); **tell a story** (an anecdote related to the topic); use a **figure of speech** (metaphor, simile, or analogy) as an explanatory **comparison**, or as a fresh new way of seeing the old; use a **quote** from someone else as a key idea to be defended, explained, or refuted. <> You'll be a better writer yourself, the more you recognize common "**openers**" in speeches and sermons, in jokes and anecdotes, and in "small talk" rituals about the weather ("Nice day") or sports ("Didja see...). While such commonplace pleasantries are appropriate in informal speech, in your written work, avoid cliches and dull, bland formula openings ("The purpose of this paper is") or trite truisms ("In today's modern world...").

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PHYSICAL ATTENTION-GETTERS?

Physical attention-getters here simply refers to the incoming stimuli received by our senses, primarily our eyes and ears. Our vision responds to shapes, sizes, colors, lights, and motion. Our hearing responds to the intensity, frequency, and duration of sounds. <> We notice anything **unusual** or **atypical** in our environment, as if an animal were suddenly alerted by a sound or a sight. Often we observe it until we're able to understand it, mentally deciding where to fit it into the rest of our experience. <> Simple audio and visual signals may include such things as a hand beckoning to us, accompanied by a smile or a come-hither look. Some such attention-getters have had a long history: the voices of merchants hawking their wares in the marketplace, the spiel of the circus barker, as well as certain music, such as drum rolls, trumpet fanfares, and bugle calls. <> In any large city, we are likely to see flags fluttering on used-car lots, flashing neon signs, airplanes towing banners, hot air balloons, blimps, and rotating searchlights. <> In print ads, attention-getters include the various styles and design of typeface, graphics, and photos. <> On TV, attention-getters include various electronic and photographic techniques such as slow-motion replays, stop-action ("freeze frame"), time-lapse photography, split-screen pictures, close-ups, blurred focus, cross-sections, enlarged details, computer graphics, and so on. <> Yet, there are other physical ways TV ads get our attention. Very simply put, we are **social beings**, accustomed to two-way conversations, and the give and take of ordinary life. Someone looks at us, we look back at them. They talk to us, we listen. Someone points a finger at something, we look. Notice how frequently this simple technique is used in TV ads to get our attention.

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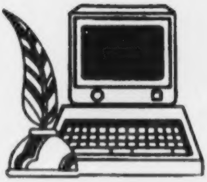

PHYSICAL ATTENTION-GETTERS?

The old folk-saying claims that "you can't tell a book by its cover." But, you can certainly **sell** a book by its cover. Book and magazine publishers give a great deal of thought to their cover design as part of their overall marketing strategy in order to attract readers. Browse a bookstore or magazine rack to see the different attempts by various designers today. <> Businesses are also greatly concerned with the visual attractiveness of their graphics, symbols, and even their letterhead stationery, as being their "first impressions" with their customers. <> Such concern about visual first impressions can be applied to your own writing. Before you submit a manuscript anywhere, it's reasonable to ask: **"Does it look nice?" Is it visually attractive?** " If it's a business letter, does it follow the standard formats and expected conventions (stationery, address blocks, indentation, polite "boilerplate" or formula phrases)? In some situations, you might ask: Are the graphics good ? Typeface? White space ? Design ? <> Avoid distracting, annoying, or insulting your reader. Keep the reader focused on your ideas, not distracted by your errors. Clean copy is expected both in business and in school: no smudges, strikeovers, or errors. <> Appropriateness is important. For example, once you leave elementary school, it's often in poor taste in school situations to use colored inks, drawings, or computer-generated graphics, and so on to "decorate" written compositions. Check first before you unleash your artistic talents. <> Overall visual design is a strategic concept, part of an initial planning process. The actual copyediting and proofreading of a final draft is a necessary tactical chore.

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ANY EMOTIONAL ASSOCIATIONS ?

Emotional appeals make up the dominant characteristics of modern ads. Vance Packard (*The Hidden Persuaders*, 1957) was the first analyst to call attention to the shift from product-oriented ads to audience-oriented ads designed to stimulate our desires. <> The association technique basically links three elements together: (1) the product, policy, or person, with (2) something **already liked or desired by** (3) the intended audience. In "scare-and-sell" ads, and in hate propaganda, the middle element is reversed, to something **already disliked or feared** by the intended audience.) <> Thus, there is the need for audience analysis ("market research" or "consumer behavior" polls, surveys, and questionaires) to find out what the audience likes and dislikes, their emotional feelings. <> Most ads simply link the product with pleasant associations, such as desire, joy, satisfaction, happiness, sympathy, love, and affection. But, ads for health and safety items often use a "scare-and-sell" tactic of presenting a problem, stirring up the negative emotions of anxiety and fear, and then offering the product as relief, as the solution. <> Many ads are not aimed at rational transactions. They sell the sizzle, not the steak. "We're not selling lipstick," said Charles Revson, president of a major cosmetics company, "we're selling hope." Advertisers have long been known as the "dream merchants," peddling illusions of happiness. Some critics, puritanical sorts, even want to restrict ads to information-transfer and to ban any ads aimed at the emotions. <> The "Suggestions" chapter notes 24 categories (sex, nature, home, and so) commonly used in these emotional appeals. In relation to attention-getters, note here that the **form** may be a dramatized story or a rhetorical question, but that the strongly emotional **content** within can be discussed in terms of these 24 common categories.

ANY EMOTIONAL ASSOCIATIONS?

Emotional appeals are usually related to persuasion, not to exposition. Emotional appeals are usually **not** appropriate for straight information-transfer which aims at the rational, logical, and cognitive aspects of the audience. <> However, if you do use an emotional appeal in expository writing, it should be a very conscious decision on your part, not accidental, one you can defend or justify. Otherwise you are open to criticism, for example, if you present information using slanted or biased language (emotionally loaded words) or half-truth arguments ("stacking the deck," omitting relevant valid counter-arguments). Some people do this unintentionally or accidentally. For example, a political advocate or a religious zealot may not realize that some words used commonly within one group may seem biased to outsiders. <> Although an emotional appeal in an expository essay may attract attention, it is usually the wrong kind of attention, and is likely to be rejected, in exposition and in rational arguments, as a fallacy. <> Traditional names for the common emotional fallacies include: ***ad hominum*** (an attack against the person rather than the argument, name-calling, character assassination); ***ad misericordium*** (an emotional appeal for pity or sympathy, a tearjerker), and ***ad populum*** ("to the people"), a general term for any emotional appeal to the audience's desires or fears. Thus, what is condemned in rational argument as a logical "fallacy" is often the core of non-rational persuasion as commonly seen in ads and much political rhetoric. <> Anytime you are writing on a controversial topic, or a deeply felt issue in which you have an emotional involvement, have another person check your writing for any bias which might distract your audience, or weaken your case.

ATTENTION-GETTING
CONFIDENCE-BUILDING
DESIRE-STIMULATING
URGENCY-STRESSING
RESPONSE-SEEKING

The more you know about confidence-building techniques in advertising, the more sensitive you will be about the "image" you project in your own writing. <> Aristotle emphasized that the **ethos**, the "image" projected by the persuader, was often the most effective means of persuasion. <> Three key elements are required for a good image: the persuader must *appear* to be **expert**, **trustworthy**, and **benevolent**. <> These qualities can be explicitly asserted, or, more commonly in advertising, implicitly suggested by nonverbals (such as smiles, warm voice tones, and friendly faces). <> Most ads emphasize sincerity ("trust me") and benevolence (being "on your side"). <> In exposition, however, usually it is most important for the writer to project the image of expertise. If, as a writer, you have such expertise and credentials, use them to your advantage. If not, use other means to build confidence in your writing. Demonstrate your expertise. For example, make it self-evident by means of careful attention to detail, clear and coherent writing, strong organization, and good sources and authorities cited. <> Two major kinds of presenters (actors) in ads are **"authority figures"** and **"friend figures."** Ads also make extensive use of brand names, trade marks, and other devices to build confidence. <> Expository writers frequently can also use outside authorities and personal credentials as appropriate ways of confidence-building.

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WHAT IMAGE IS PROJECTED?

Establishing trust is basic. We often believe a message simply on the basis of our belieiving in, or liking of, the speaker. <>Over two thousand years ago, Aristotle's **Rhetoric** emphasized that the **most effective** means of persuasion (more effective even that rational or emotional appeals) was the *ethos*, the "image" projected by the persuader of being **expert, trustworthy**, and **benevolent**. Aristotle observed, realistically, that persuasion was still very effective whether or not these qualities of character were really genuine. The important thing for effective persuasion, he wrote was the **appearance** of these qualities. (Puritans shudder at Artistotle's realistic description ofhow people actually persuade.) Classical rhetoricians have long analyzed the projected image of an individual persuader. In political rhetoric, for example, the "character issue" involves the appearance and the reality of these three qualities which candidates must always project, and sometimes acturally possess. <>Today, such "image building" is not only done by an individual persuader, but is often done by a committee on behalf of a product, a corporation, or a candidate. Yet the principles remain the same. <>All persuaders (good or bad, public or private, commercial or political) can be analyzed interms of their **claims** of being: (1) **expert**, that is, knowledgeable, informed, competent, wise, prudent, a person of good judgment and good sense; (2) **trustworthy**, that is, honest, sincere, truthful, open, candid, a person of integrity and good moral character; (3) **benevolent**, that is friendly to the audience, an ally, a person of good will, with your interest in mind, someone who is "on your side." <> In reverse, political "attack" rhetoric consists of charges against opponents as being **not expert** (incompetent), **not trustworthy** (not of good moral character) or **not benevolent** (not "on your side," but benefiting others, such as "special interests," or self-seeking).

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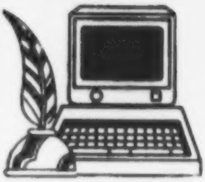

WHAT IS YOUR PROJECTED IMAGE?

Establishing trust is obviously important in persuasion, but it is also needed in straight expository writing. In exposition, the audience's purpose is to get accurate, reliable, and useful information for their own benefit. Thus, in informational writing, the most important aspect of the writer's projected image should be that of an "**expert**," someone who is knowledgeable, informed, and competent. <> People who do have genuine expertise and experience can use this approach most successfully. If you do not have such expertise, then you want to keep in the background as a writer and keep the focus on the intrinsic quality of your writing. <> Such expertise should be shown, made self-evident by the writing itself: clear, coherent, careful, exact, logical, temperate, and well organized. In contrast, imagine a "crazy" Letter to the Editor filled with unsubstantiated generalities, incoherent arguments, unconnected ideas, and careless errors. <> Relatively less important in expository writing are the other aspects of the "image," of being seen as trustworthy and benevolent. Such sincerity and friendliness, while most important in persuasion, are usually not major concerns in straight informational writing. <> To project a good image in your writing, demonstrate your expertise by producing work that is careful, clear, and coherent: that "looks good" and "reads well."

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WHAT WORDS & NONVERBALS USED?

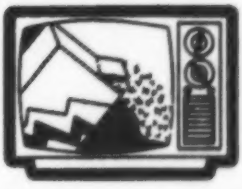
Words are commonly used to help create a good image. Persuaders sometimes simply say "trust me" or simply assert that they are competent, trustworthy, and "on our side." **Words** commonly used in confidence-building include:

> absolutely, assure, assurance, rest assured, certain, certainly, concerned, confidence, depend, dependable, established, experienced, expert, expertise, fair, friendly, honest, integrity, kind, no obligation, no risk, nothing to lose, one of ours, positively, proven, prudent, reasonable, recommended, reliable, reputable, reputation, responsible, satisfaction, sincere, sincerity, straight, straightforward, trust, trustworthy, true, truthful, wise, wisdom.

Nonverbal ways of suggesting trustworthiness have always been important in interpersonal dealings as we display and recognize many subtle cues as we talk to each other. Since television has been created, nonverbals have become even more important because of the possibility of editing tape so that only the best images are seen. <> On TV, speakers often talk to us as they look at us, with the camera close-up on their eyes. Well trained in the appropriate body language, these presenters are likely to give us a friendly smile, a sincere look, good direct eye contact, gestures with an open hand and upraised palm, and a soothing voice tone, all helping to create the appropriate mood or tone. Sometimes it's the relaxed familiarity of a warm friendly conversation. Sometimes it's the tone of fatherly advice or motherly concern. But, whatever the mood, there's a lot of effort going into such studied casualness. <> Degree is important for effectiveness. If the presenter is "too friendly," the ad can seem phony or shallow . If the presenter is "too expert," the ad can seem stuffy or dull. Often the best persuasion goes unnoticed, seems natural, soothes, lulls, relaxes, and creates trust.

WHAT WORDS & NONVERBALS USED?

In contrast to ads (which often rely on quick, simple assertions — "trust me"), most expository writing builds confidence by demonstrating expertise by the quality of the writing itself. <> Several common problems exist here for the writer: you can damage your image by **being phony**, by **being careless**, or by using the **wrong "voice."** <> "Big words" (pretentious language and jargon) are used by some people trying to create a false impression of being an expert, a verbal display which is more likely to harm than to help. Be aware that this is a real problem, both in the schools and in the professions, because the novice writer wants to display some expertise, to blend in, to be accepted, or to write "like a lawyer" (or a sociologist, or whatever) by using the current buzzwords or jargon. <> **Carelessness** is another potential problem which can damage your image. If you were writing for a job, you wouldn't send in an application letter filled with smudges or errors. Make a good impression. Write a "clean" paper: visually attractive, with no careless errors, typos, or smudges. Check for errors when you are revising for a final draft, not while trying to produce a first draft. (Ironically, some computer-generated papers **look** so good that their elegant appearance often disguises the chaos within.) <> Select the right **tone of "voice"** for your writing, appropriate to the audience and situation. For example, in some informal writing, a relaxed friendly tone might be pleasant. But, if you're "too close," it can sound cloying or cutesy, like the teacher trying to be "one of the gang" by using teen-age slang. A common error in student papers is a preachy, almost scolding tone (filled with "shoulds" and "oughts") lecturing the reader. Other roles for a writer do exist: the reporter, the cool analyst, or the reasonable persuader. Choose your voice and your tone carefully. Imagine your audience and imagine the tone of your speaking voice. Who are you ? How do you treat them? (As equals, superiors, inferiors ?) How close are you?



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WHAT PRESENTERS ARE USED?

Presenters, in the broadest sense, are the persons who deliver the messages in ads: actors, models, or announcers who do the voice-overs, people who give testimonials, celebrities who do endorsements, and even fictional and cartoon characters such as Betty Crocker, Charlie Brown, and Ronald McDonald. Two basic kinds of presenters are **authority figures** and **friend figures**. <> **Authority figures** are those presenters we trust or like because they suggest the good aspects of the nurturing parent: the idealized protection, care, wisdom, and guidance of good old Mom & Dad — expert, trustworthy, and on our side. Authority figures can be real, or rented: for example, Lee Iococca for Chrysler, or Karl Malden for American Express. <> **Friend figures** are those presenters we trust or like because they suggest people we would like **to be**, or **be with**, or **be liked by**. These friends we empathize with can range from "plain folks" (scenes in beer ads of "the guys" having fun; in toy ads, of happy kids playing) to the idealized "beautiful people" of our wish-fulfillment dreams (luxury backgrounds, elegant clothes, fancy cars). Fictional and cartoon characters are usually friendly, "cute" — likeable or loveable, like a pet. <> Sports heroes, fashion models, and movie stars all get big bucks for being presenters. Most advertisers do **not** expect audiences to make rational, or even conscious, decisions to run out and buy Superbread because their heroes endorse it. Endorsements are simply another use of the association technique, transfering emotional feelings by linking the product with someone we already like. <> TV newscasters and radio DJs are other presenters concerned with their image, with being well-liked, and with being our "favorites." When we tune in, their ratings (and profits and salaries) go up.

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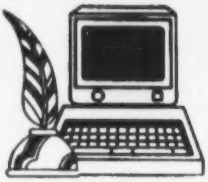

WHAT AUTHORITIES DO YOU CITE?

Persuasion is audience-centered and the presenters are always chosen with the audience in mind. Exposition is usually topic-centered and the authorities cited are determined by the topic, often unknown to the audience. Nevertheless, just as advertisers take care in selecting presenters in order to add favorable associations, so also, on some occasions, expository writers can benefit by their selection of the authorities they cite, refer to, or quote. <> In exposition, it's not whether the audience already likes, but already **knows** and respects, the authority cited. Thus, know who is already esteemed by your audience. For example, in a trade journal, professional journal, law or medical review, it would not be appropriate to cite popular sources. (Don't quote the *National Enquirer* for your medical reports!) <> Know also that within any field there's a "pecking order" and that some authorities and journals are more esteemed. (How do you know which ones? Keep asking people in the discipline or librarians.) <> **"Name-dropping"** is as common in writing as it is in conversation, and some people do it better than others. In writing, avoid pedantic decorations (authorities cited, footnotes used, bibliographies padded) simply for display. Don't overcite authorities. Don't try to impress a reader, or overwhelm an opponent, simply by gathering as many authorities as possible. For example, some amateurish religious tracts cite biblical "chapter and verse" every other word, a display of pseudo-scholarship producing a surface illusion of "learning," but often creating obscure and chaotic prose. <> Observe good writers. Note how they handle authorities. Be aware of current conventions or norms within the field. In literary studies, for example, at one time it was fashionable to use scores of footnotes and Latin abbreviations on every page. Today, MLA Style Guides favor very simple notes incorporated in parenthesis within the text.

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WHAT BRAND NAMES ARE USED?

Building confidence, or establishing trust in a product need not be deceptive or artificial. There are many honest people, many good products, and many mutual benefits shared between buyers and sellers. <> **Brand names** are some of the most common and most important confidence-builders in advertising. While a brand name may not seem to be an important aspect of any single ad, overall consumer confidence is built by the constant long term repetition of such brand names, trade marks, logos, and visual symbols. As you analyze ads, notice how many brands you can instantly identify simply by their distinctive symbols, shapes, colors, or packaging. <> In the pre-industrial age, good craftsmen put their own marking on the pottery and silverware they made as a way of identifying their work. Thus, trademarks, and later, brand names, became associated with reputable companies and quality products. Sellers today use brand names in order to establish confidence, emphasizing either "**tradition,**" that their product has been trusted for a long time, or "**popularity,**" that their product is trusted by many people. At present, the USA has more than a half million registered trademarks competing to be known and liked by the public. <> In business, a well known and trusted name is worth a lot of money. A reputable company takes great care in protecting its name, not only in its internal operations (such as product quality-control, guarantees, customer relations), but also in legally defending itself against imitators and counterfeiters. <> "Brand loyalty" — that buyers would know, trust, and prefer their brand — is the dream of every seller. In general, brand name products and established stores are more trustworthy than unbranded items and unknown stores.

WHAT CREDENTIALS CAN BE USED?

Credentials, or credits, here refers to your genuine accomplishments (such as knowledge, experience, awards, affiliations) related to the topic. <> Just as products and corporations can build audience confidence by calling attention to their established experience and proven record, so also individuals can build audience confidence in their work if they are able to point out their legitimate merits. Readers often read articles or buy books simply on the basis of the author's past record, or their credentials. <> If you have credentials, display them tactfully. The problem is how to display them without seeming to be bragging, vain or immodest, arrogant or pretentious. Fortunately, many **standard conventions** are available to help writers advertise themselves. In magazine articles, for example, an introductory footnote (usually an "Editor's Note") cites the author's achievements. In books, this is usually done, by others, on the cover "blurb" or in a foreword or afterword. In speeches, the function of the Master of Ceremonies is to introduce the speakers and their achievements, so that they won't have to talk about themselves. Frequently, such introductions and editorial notes are provided by the writers themselves, written in third person. <> Writers (whether academic, business, or free lance) usually keep a copy of what they write, some "writing samples," and a list of their publications, as part of their credentials. In movies and TV, people seek "credits," not only for vanity, but also because legal contracts, payments, and royalties are based on them. <> In some writing situations, it is **not** appropriate to focus any attention on the writer. For example, a common error in student papers is a constant reflexive focus back on the writer, expressing subjective feelings or opinions ("I think...I feel...I believe") rather than a focus on the assigned topic. <> Writers should make a conscious decision about the appropriateness of introducing one's self, or displaying one's credentials.

Standard Phrasings in ads usually assert that a benefit exists, that a buyer (or other) desires it, and that it produces the desired effect (satisfaction); these are often phrased as directives or in variations, such as negatives and rhetorical questions.

Asserting a Benefit
Save (money, time, effort)
Get (a specific benefit)
Improve... Be better.. Be more
Stop, Solve, Prevent, Avoid (a problem)
Enjoy

Directives
You need
You should get
You must have
You ought to
You have to

Negatives & Rhetorical Questions
Don't be disappointed
Don't be sorry later
Don't worry
Need it? Want it?
Shouldn't you really have?
Don't you deserve it?

Asserting Desire
Just what you've always wanted
Everything you desire in
What you've always hoped for
Just what you expected from
Everything you've dreamed of

Asserting Satisfaction
You'll enjoy
You'll be pleased
You'll be happy
You'll love
You'll like

Asserting Satisfaction & Desire by Others (Gifts)
Your family needs
The kids will love
Show them you care
She'll be pleased
He'll enjoy
Delight your family
Reward them with
Your dog will love

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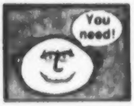

ATTENTION-GETTING CONFIDENCE-BUILDING **DESIRE-STIMULATING - CLAIMS** URGENCY-STRESSING RESPONSE-SEEKING

The more alert you are to the key words used and the explicit claims made in ads, the more aware you will become of your own use of words and ideas. <> After getting attention (Hi!) and establishing confidence (Trust Me!), advertising stimulates desire by **promising benefits**: a pleasure to be gained, or a pain to be avoided. The "main selling point" (the body, the content, the substance) of most ads is made up of claims — explicit or implicit — about the product, or how it will benefit the audience. <> **Explicit claims**, product-centered, are discussed in this chapter. (Implicit suggestions, especially about audience-centered intangible benefits, are discussed in the next chapter.) <> In advertising, the explicit claims about a product's merits can be encompassed by a dozen major categories: **Quality, Quantity, Beauty, Efficiency, Scarcity, Novelty, Stability, Reliability, Simplicity, Utility, Rapidity, and Safety.** <> In contrast to these limited and predictable ad claims, expository writers often have more difficulty in defining their purpose, their thesis or "issue," and their key ideas. <> **Key words**, as used here, refer to both the proper nouns and the common nouns and verbs related to the product. All writers need to have a basic working vocabulary specific to their topic. Writers need to "do their homework" by gathering basic facts, ideas, and words. <> **Intensifiers** (including superlatives, hyperboles, exaggerations, and puffery) are often used by ad writers deliberately to hype the product. Expository writers sometimes use other common intensifiers inappropriately. <> **Qualifiers** in ads are often required by law to prevent overstatements. In contrast, academic writing tends to overqualify from self-imposed caution.

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WHAT KEY WORDS ARE USED?

Key words, as used here, are the **proper nouns** (including brand names and trademarks) and the **common nouns** and **verbs** (the content words) which are related to the product or service advertised. For example, an auto ad usually contains both proper names (Chevrolet, Camaro, Caprice) and relevant common nouns and verbs ("power steering, bucket seats, convertible, accelerates"). <> If you were an ad writer, you'd have to "do your homework" before writing about a product. Ideally, the ad writer should know all about the product: be able to name all the parts, see the manufacturing process, talk to the people who make it, who sell it, and who buy it. <> Analyze the wording of an ad. Begin by using a print ad with adequate written text. Circle the key words. Get used to isolating individual words rather than reading them in context. This is hard to do because, once we learn to read, we tend to read the whole context quickly rather than word by word individually. But this analytical technique is a useful way to focus closely on the parts. You've heard and seen thousands of ads without paying much attention; however, after you spend a few hours circling key content words in magazine ads, you'll begin to see predictable patterns you've never noticed before. For example, some verbs ("cleans, protects, relieves") describe actions related to what the product or service does . Other verbs ("buy, get, choose, select, drink, eat, smoke, wear, go, visit, shop at") specify what the audience is to do . <> In addition to the content words, notice also how the various "function words" (prepositions, conjunctions) are used for organization and coherence.

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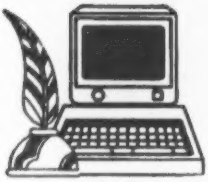

WHAT ARE YOUR KEY WORDS?

Key words, as used here, means both the specific **proper nouns** (names of persons, places, things) and the **common nouns and verbs** related to your topic. <> For example, if you're writing about Congress, the proper nouns include names of specific laws, lawmakers, bureaus, and agencies (HB 1645, Rep. Jones, FTC). The common nouns and verbs would be a political vocabulary including the common metaphoric ways of describing intricate actions (such as "pork barreling" and "arm twisting"). <> Student essays often lack substance. They simply don't have enough ideas and information in them. Sometimes, students will have only a few vague ideas about a topic and — the night before an essay is due — write from these few scant fragments. The resultant essay usually has little substance, but much padding, vague generalities, and redundancies. To avoid this, try to create — as soon as you get an assignment — a **word list** of words you think are going to be related or appropriate to your topic. If you can't quickly generate a list of 50 or 60 such key words, this is an early warning sign that you're in trouble, that you don't have enough easily-available information. <> Increase your own basic information by reading the basic sources first: encyclopedia articles, introductory textbooks, and "overview" essays. Add their vocabulary to your original list. Use a thesaurus. This is simple advice, but very few people have ever used the excellent new Encyclopedia Britannica (EB3), or the Great Books Syntopicon, or Merriam-Webster's Synonym Dictionary, all of which are easily available at any library. <> If you start with a list of key words, you can later use it as a **checklist** in your revision process to see if you omitted anything you wanted to say.

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WHAT EXPLICIT CLAIMS MADE?

What's the message ? Ads are purposeful. Their parts are functional. Sometimes an ad's purpose may be indirect or subtle (as in "soft-sell" or "feel good" ads), but usually an ad's purpose is clear and obvious. Ads **promise benefits** by means of both explicit claims (listed below) and implicit suggestions (discussed in the next chapter). <> Explicit claims in commercial advertising relate to a dozen major categories of benefits intrinsic to the product or service: **Quality**, **Quantity**, **Beauty**, **Efficiency**, **Scarcity**, **Novelty**, **Stability**, **Reliability**, **Simplicity**, **Utility**, **Rapidity**, and **Safety**. Extensive word lists (pp. 90-94) demonstrate that these are the key themes and key words related to any product and service advertised. As you analyze ads (e.g. by circling key words), note how these words will fall into the predictable patterns listed. <> Good ad writers "do their homework" before they write the ad campaign. Such preparation gives the ad writers both the factual knowledge and a sense of strategy so they can choose to emphasize certain benefits and use the appropriate words. <> In contrast, students often start writing the night before a paper is due and try to create with a few fragments of rushed research, then end up by padding with vague generalities ("bull") or blocks of undigested factual information ("cow"). Many problems in student writing can be cured simply by "doing one's homework": careful reading and advance preparation.

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WHAT ARE YOUR KEY IDEAS?

What are you trying to say ? What's your point ? What's your thesis? <> Writers of expository essays often have difficulty trying to define their key ideas, especially when the work is assigned by others — whether teachers or bosses. In contrast, the goals and purposes of ads are usually simple and well defined: they promise benefits and seek responses. <> Ideally, the expository writer ought to have an end purpose constantly in mind: **What do you want to say? What benefit does your audience receive?** <> Some expository writings (e.g. directions, instructions) have obvious purpose and practical benefit: the reader learns how to do something. However, many writings do not have such an obvious, immediate, or even a specific benefit, but may furnish the reader with a general knowledge or a better understanding (e.g. of relationships, parts, processes, causes and effects) which may provide indirect or future benefits. <> Composition textbooks usually suggest that writers try to write their **"thesis"** in one declarative sentence: straight, simple, clear and direct, with no rhetorical questions, ambiguities, or figures of speech. <> Often, in the outline stage, writers work from a few fragments, or a few words jotted down. At some early point, to clarify these vague ideas, it helps to predicate, by specifying exactly, that something **is** or **is not**. It helps to change from a "fragment outline" to a "topic sentence" outline. <> Imagine you're going to be interviewed on TV for a 30-second response to answer the question, "What do you want to say?" Prepare one clear declarative sentence.

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WHAT INTENSIFIERS ARE USED?

Advertising is well known for its use of **intensifiers**: superlative adjectives ("greatest, best, most beautiful, fastest, lowest prices"), comparatives ("better than, more advanced, improved, increased, fewer calories, less filling"), hyperboles and exaggerations, and many other ways to hype and to heap praise upon the product being sold. <> In one sense, advertisers are little different from other wordsmiths, including poets and lovers, who use such **"glittering generalities"** to praise the object of their affection, for one motive or another. But, in contrast to most poets and lovers, advertisers today often have to defend their claims or face legal problems. <> **"Puffery"** is the term most often used in legal cases to describe most of the intensifiers in ads. A rather technical definition of puffery would include the use of words " which praise the item to be sold with subjective opinions, superlatives, or exaggerations, vaguely or generally, stating no specific facts." (Ivan Preston, in *The Great American Blow-Up*, who notes that puffery is legal, but argues that legal definitions need to be refined in order to reduce falsity.) Thus, an ad may not make a false specific claim (for example, about the measurable quantity of an item), yet may state almost any general subjective opinion. Puffery is legal because courts have ruled that reasonable and prudent people are able to discount such "seller's talk." <> In any persuasion situation, it's a good rule to expect everyone to **intensify their own "good" and downplay their own "bad."** <> In ads, as you note the intensifiers, distinguish between the specific claims and the puffery.

WHAT INTENSIFIERS DO YOU USE?

In speech, some people use intensifiers habitually without realizing it. <> **Vulgarities**, for example, are commonly used as all-purpose intensifiers to express feeling or emphasis, unrelated to their meaning. If we simply transferred speech to writing, these vulgarities would be very noticeable (the F word, the S word, etc.). However, we'd probably not notice the more **commonplace** intensifiers of conversational speech, including words such as: "very, really, pretty, lots of, for sure." In writing, such intensifiers can usually be deleted or made more precise. "Sweet" intensifiers are also common in speech. Gift shop clerks have been known to go beserk when triggered by someone saying, for the millionth time, *"Isn't that cute... nice... sweet...."* <> Writing texts once used the sexist term "schoolgirl style" as a label for informal writing (as in a letter or a diary) which was characterized by gushy sentimentality or undue intensity, including frequent use of "quotation" marks, underlining, italics, FULL CAPS, and emphatic punctuation !!!! <> Constant use of intensifiers and absolutes may indicate the writer's absolutist mentality, or an attempt to persuade simply by strong assertions. In formal logic, the fallacy of circular reasoning called "begging the question" (petitio principii) occurs when someone simply asserts to be true the very thing which needs to be proven. Words such as "obviously" are sometimes used carelessly ("begging the question") because they try to pass over the issues that need to be discussed. <> Check your own writing habits for these intensifiers: "absolutely, basically, certainly, definitely, fundamentally, incredibly, obviously, of course, perfectly, positively, really, simply, surely, very." (If you use a word processor, use a Global Search command.)

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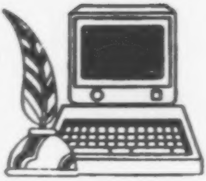
WHAT QUALIFIERS ARE USED?

Qualifiers in advertising are very controversial and misunderstood. Qualifiers are words or phrases that restrict, limit, or modify the claims made, or the benefits promised. Qualifiers include such words as: "may, can, possibly, some, many, often, less than, almost, virtually, in some cases, as many as, save up to 75%, batteries not included, some assembly required." <> Some critics attack qualifiers as being slyly deceptive, as being **"weasel words."** However, most qualifiers used in ads today are **required** by consumer protection laws designed to prevent advertisers from making absolute claims. Consider the historical context: quack claims, panaceas, and cure-alls (absolutely promising a "cure") used to be sold — before federal regulatory agencies were created. Now, FDA regulations stipulate that certain qualifying words (e.g."helps, may help to, helps relieve the symptoms of, alleviates, can aid, in some cases") **must** be used in health claims to alert consumers to the limitations of drugs and medicines. FTC regulations also require certain qualifiers to be used in advertising other products to prevent deceptive statements or implications. <> Qualifications usually appear in the **"small print"** in ads, not designed to attract attention. Breakfast cereals, for example, are forced to qualify in ads that they are "a part of" a nutritious breakfast, but they don't have to reveal how little that part is. The exact wording of such **disclosure laws** are usually the focus of bitter fights between consumerists and advertisers. Read the "small print" before you buy anything ! <> Political rhetoric is another area to pay attention to absolute promises and qualified ones. Politicians often get condemned or criticized for making qualifications, but there are many situations in which such qualifiers are needed and appropriate.



WHAT QUALIFIERS DO YOU USE?

Qualifiers are words or phrases that restrict, limit, or modify statements. Instead of making complete generalizations, using "all" or "always," you can use certain qualifiers to indicate **frequency, degree, or limits** ("some, many, often, frequently, occasionally, usually, once in while"), and to express **doubt, lack of certitude, or hypotheticals** ("perhaps, maybe, if"). <> Or we can qualify by making a general statement, then immediately use a cue word (e.g. "however, but, yet, on the other hand") to link it with a limiting statement which follows. A common paragraph pattern opens with a generalization in the topic sentence, followed by one or more sentences showing the qualifications ("however"), then concludes by re-affirming ("nevertheless") the validity of the opening generalization. <> Qualifiers are useful and appropriate ways to avoid absolute statements, or to express a lack of certitude. However, they can be used inappropriately. For example, academic writing is notorious for overqualifying. Scholars sometimes become too cautious in trying to think of all possible exceptions. Their every verb is cautious ("seems, appears, tends to be") and their every strong statement is hedged, or balanced by a qualifier. Thus, some pedants are attacked as being wishy-washy or mealy-mouthed. <> At the other extreme, some people are not aware of their own absolutism and authoritarianism. They affirm everything in absolutes ("all, always, every, everyone, no, none, no one"), or in simple categorical assertions ("it is"), or with question-begging cue words ("obviously, certainly, as anyone can see"). <> As you revise, be aware of your own generalizations and qualifiers. Use them deliberately and appropriately.

Word Lists: Intrinsic Claims

The following brief lists itemize some specific words used in each of the 12 major categories of **claims** which can be made about the "good" **intrinsic** to a product or service (superiority, quantity, etc.). Such descriptive lists, drawn from observation, have omissions (due to the space available here) and overlaps (due to the freewheeling use of words), but they illustrate how the words used in ads fall into predictable patterns. Furthermore, certain clusters of words are predictable, as well as the negative words used in "scare-and-sell" ads. (See: *The Pitch*, pp. 41-131) In addition to this direct explicit use of certain key words, ads commonly use words indirectly (by means of metaphoric language, analogies, examples and dramatized stories) and nonverbals (including visual images, backgrounds and context, music and sound, gestures and facial expressions).

Read through these lists. Then, carefully observe an ad. Look for these key words. Itemize what you see. For example, **circle** all of the key words in a magazine ad, or **write a list** as you replay videotaped TV ads. Obviously, you've seen or heard all of these words before, perhaps paying little attention to them. But, if you practice this simple exercise a few times, you will become much more sensitive to certain claims, the limited number of categories, the common clusters of words, and the options chosen by the writer. Furthermore, you'll become much more aware of your own options and word choice as you write.

Superiority

authentic
best
deluxe
excellent
exceptional
extraordinary
finest
first class
flawless
genuine
greatest
ideal
incomparable
magnificent
outstanding
perfect
prize-winning
prominent
spectacular
splendid
super
superb
superior
supreme
top-rate
tremendous
unbelievable
unsurpassed
ultimate
ultra-

Quantity

abundant
ample
big
bonus
bountiful
colossal
complete
economy-size
enormous
entire
extra
family-size
giant
huge
immense
includes
jumbo
king-size
large
largest
many
more
most
numerous
roomy
spacious
stupendous
super
total
vast
wide variety...

Beauty

adorable
attractive
beautiful
breathtaking
charming
comely
cute
dazzling
delightful
divine
dramatic
dreamy
elegant
fabulous
fair
glamour
glamorous
good-looking
gorgeous
graceful
heavenly
handsome
lovely
nice
pretty
striking
stunning
sweet
tasteful
wonderful

Efficiency

ability
able
adept
aids
capable
competent
diligent
does the job
effective
efficient
energetic
fast-acting
hard working
heavy-duty
helps
industrious
organized
potent
powerful
productive
proficient
qualified
really works
results
solution
solves
strong
sturdy
tough
works

Scarcity

charter member
collector's item
distinctive
exceptional
exclusive
exclusively at
first edition
hard-to-find
infrequent
limited edition
limited supply
little-known
most treasured
most valued
one of a kind
only here
only a few
original
personalized
quantity limited
rare
scarce
seldom seen
singular
special
uncommon
unique
unusual
while supply lasts
your very own

Novelty

advanced
all new
amazing new
announcing
breakthrough
contemporary
discovery
exciting new
fashion
fashionable
first showing
fresh
future
introducing
introductory
just released
latest
modern
modernistic
new improved
novel
now
original
premier
recent
revolutionary new
state-of-the-art
style
stylish
timely
today's
up-to-date

Stability

aged
ancient
antique
classic
conservation
conserve
continuous
established
ever since
experienced
for over __ years
heritage
history
historic
mature
nostalgic
old-fashioned
old style
past
permanent
preserve
proven
ripe
seasoned
stabile
time-tested
tradition
traditional
tried and true
unchanging
yesteryear

Reliability

authorized
bonded
dependable
durable
endurance
enduring
expected
experienced
faithful
firm
fixed
identical
lasting
licensed
long-lasting
permanent
predictable
ready
reliable
repeated
same
secure
solid
stable
standard
steadfast
steady
trustworthy
unchanging
uniform

Simplicity

all-expense paid
all-included
automatic
beginner's
billed later
built-in
carefree
child's play
complete with
convenient
delivered
easy, ez
effortless
energy-saving
fingertip control
foolproof
hassle-free
instant
labor-saving
maintenance-free
one step
problem-free
push-button
ready to wear
simple
self-storing
smooth
step-by-step
time-saving
trouble-free

Utility

adjustable
all-in-one
all purpose
basic outfit
combination
compatible
convertible
detachable
double-duty
down-to-earth
dozens of uses
essential
fully-equipped
functional
go-anywhere
interchangeable
many-sided
mix and match
multi-purpose
portable
practical
resourceful
re-usable
reversible
sensible
three-in-one
useful
variable
versatile
washable

Rapidity

(**Fast** desirable: a "**means**")
accelerate
brisk
expedite
fast
hurry
instant
jiffy
prompt
quick
rapid
ready
rush
speedy
sudden
swift

(**Slow** desirable: an "**end**")
calm
deliberate
gradual
leisurely
long lasting
moderate
relaxed
restful
slow
time-released

Safety

burglarproof
care
careful
certain
childproof
fail-safe
fireproof
fire-resistant
fire-retardant
guard
guaranteed
harmless
immune
nonflammable
protected
pure
resists
rest assured
risk-free
safe
safeguarded
shatter proof
shielded
sure
tested
unadulterated
uncontaminated
unpolluted
withstands
worry-free

ATTENTION -GETTING
CONFIDENCE-BUILDING
DESIRE-STIMULATING-SUGGESTIONS
URGENCY-STRESSING
RESPONSE-SEEKING

The more sensitive you are to the suggestions in ads (the indirect ways that messages are implied by the connotations of some words, by figures of speech, and by nonverbals), the more alert you will be to your own use of such indirect ways. <> Most ads make very few direct explicit claims. Many ad messages are implicit, suggested indirectly, because they want the audience to add more, or to co-create the persuasive message. <> In contrast, expository writing which transfers information seeks to be direct, explicit, and to avoid potentially unclear suggestions. <> Modern advertising emphasizes the **association technique** which simply links: (1) the product, with (2) something already liked or desired by (3) the intended audience. Thus, **audience analysis** and **motivational research** are important. Ads link products with human needs and wants, suggesting "added value" benefits in such categories as: **basic needs** (food, activity, surroundings, security, sex, economy); a sense of **certitude** (from religion or science; or approval by the "best" people, or "most" or "average" people); a sense of **space or territory** (neighborhood, nation, nature); a sense of **love and belonging** (intimacy, family, groups); and other **growth needs** (esteem, play, generosity, curiosity, creativity, completion). <> Senders imply. <> Receivers infer. <> Because inference-making co-creates, it needs a shared knowledge so that the receivers can "fill in the gaps" of fragmentary messages.<> Words rich in **connotations** (with multiple meanings, imprecise, ambiguous, or vague) are very common and useful in ads and other persuasive messages. Words with limited **denotations** (with more restricted, limited meaning, clear and precise) are more appropriate in much informational writing. <> **Figures of speech** (such as hyperboles, rhetorical questions, puns) are common ways to intensify the suggestiveness of persuasive and expressive writing. <> In exposition, the most common figures of speech are those of repetition, arrangement, and comparison (such as similes, metaphors, and analogies). Metaphoric language transfers not only information, but also emotional feelings. <> **Nonverbals** include all of the information and feelings which can be conveyed by means of visual images, sounds (music, tone of voice), smells, body language (gestures, facial expressions) backgrounds and contexts. Nonverbals imply. They suggest, without explicitly saying anything. Wordless, they prompt us, as receivers, to co-create.

ANALYZING ANALYZING ANALYZING

ARE OTHER IDEAS SUGGESTED?

Most ads make very few direct, explicit claims. <> Most of the messages, verbal and nonverbal, sent by an ad will be **indirect, suggested, implicit**. <> Modern advertising (after the 1950s) is dominated **not** by explicit claims that say something about the product, but by implications that suggest that audiences could receive "added benefits" relating to their desires. <> Ads may explicitly say one thing ("save money"), but implicitly suggest others, by the background scenery of luxury homes, beautiful people, and good times. <> Advertisers often "work backwards," starting not with the product, but with the audience's needs. In our affluent society, often these are not survival needs (basic food, clothing, shelter), but psychic needs — for a sense of esteem, or success, or popularity. "We don't sell perfume," commented Charles Revson, president of a major cosmetics company, "we sell hope." <> The **association technique** basically links together three elements: (1) the product, service, person or idea to be sold; (2) with something **already liked or desired** by; (3) the intended audience. (In negative campaigns, such as "scare-and-sell" ads or political attacks, the middle element is reversed to: something **already disliked** or feared.) Thus, "target audience" analysis and "consumer behavior" research — surveys, polls, questionaires — to find out what people already liked or desired, has become increasingly important.<> Such association can be done by explicit claims, or implicitly suggested by using words rich in connotations, figures of speech, and nonverbals. <> **Senders imply. Receivers infer.** <> Assume that advertisers are good at making implications. As receivers, we need to become better inference-makers.

COMPOSING
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COMPOSING

DO YOU SUGGEST OTHERS IDEAS?

For most informational writing (with a goal of **clarity**), writers do not use implications or suggestions which might be unclear, misinterpreted, or misunderstood. If writers inappropriately use words rich with emotional connotations, such exposition is often accused of being biased or slanted. Exposition generally uses explicit statements: clear, direct, unambiguous words and phrasings. <> If you do want to use the association technique in informational writing to emphasize the links that do exist, then be explicit: use direct statements of being ("She is"), membership or affiliation ("He belongs to"), or desire or preference ("She likes"). <> When you're writing persuasion, or expressive writing (poetry, fiction), you might want to imply or suggest more, by using words rich in connotations and multiple meanings. But, the general rule for expository writing remains: do **not** suggest, imply, or hint. Be explicit, direct, clear. <> Implicit messages trigger the audience to co-create, to fill in the gaps, to infer the rest, to get more involved. <> **Inference-making** is based on a recognition of standard repetitive patterns and relationships, and of regularity in sequences and contexts. <> **Shared knowledge** is necessary between the sender making the implications and the receiver making the inferences. Otherwise the implications "go over the head," for example, of foreigners, strangers to the situation, young children, and the dim-witted. They don't "catch on."

ANALYZING ANALYZING ANALYZING

WHAT WORDS ARE USED?

Suggestions are best made with words which are vague, general, abstract, ambiguous, have rich connotations, or have multiple meanings. <> Although advertisers can make suggestions (in addition to explicit claims) about a product's intrinsic qualities, they are more likely to make such implications about the intangible "added value" benefits to lead the audience to make inferences. If an ad were to make an explicit claim that the product would bring "success" and "popularity," such a claim would be unbelievable and perhaps illegal. But, often implications made (by associating words and images) can lead audiences to make these inferences, not logically, but in a kind of "wishful thinking." <> What do audiences need, want, or desire? Various scholars categorize human needs. Listed here (pp. 104-112) are useful word-lists of 24 categories of **human needs and wants** (incorporating Maslow and others) often used by advertisers including: **basic needs** (food, activity, surroundings, security, sex, economy); a sense of **certitude** (from religion or science; or approval by the "best" people, or the "most" or "average" people); a sense of **space or territory** (neighborhood, nation, nature); a sense of **love and belonging** (intimacy, family, groups); and other **growth needs** (esteem, play, generosity, curiosity, creativity, completion). <> Persuaders have always attempted to lure. But now, with modern technology, ads can present a world of illusions, carefully edited and designed to stimulate our inferences. <> Persuaders can set us up. Implications can entice us to our own wish fulfillment fantasies, "wishful thinking." We infer what we want to believe: "we hear what we want to hear." We filter out the bad. Thus, not only can we co-create the message, but also we can co-operate in our own deception.

COMPOSING
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WHAT WORDS DO YOU USE?

Straight information transfer (if this is your goal) is best done with words with limited denotation, restricted meaning, precise, concrete and specific. Be sensitive to the differences between denotations and connotations. <> Connotations **already exist** within the "ongoing conversation" of our language community. (Philosophical aside: we enter that party late; after we leave, that party still goes on.) We learn the connotations of words slowly, by experience, by reading, and by sensitivity to the nuances. Some people have a better ear for this, noticing the appropriateness of words in context: when, where, and how they are used. Other people "can't take a hint" or "can't read between the lines." They are too literal, unaware that direct explicit messages make up only a small portion of our communication. <> Yet, people are always **making inferences** because we always perceive specifics, only parts of things and of processes. Thus, we keep making connections, filling in the gaps, based on our knowledge, prior experience, and probabilities. <> If we see an effect, we infer a cause. If we see a cause, we infer an effect. If we see a part, we infer the whole. If we see one part of a process or sequence, we infer what went before and what will follow. If we hear someone complain about a "bad," we can infer that they hold the opposite to be a "good." If we hear an opinion (a conclusion) expressed, we infer the unstated premises. <> We don't necessarily do this logically. We can err, make mistakes. (Logicians have labels for such errors:"jumping to conclusions,""guilt by association," "*post hoc ergo propter hoc.*") In practice, most of our simple daily activities are based on inference-making from the bits and fragments, the specifics, that we encounter. So "jumping to conclusions" is not necessarily wrong, unless an error is made, or we are lured and deceived. We usually get along adequately with such haphazard inference-making in real life. When we do make mistakes, often we get feedback and correct them, trial and error.

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WHAT FIGURES OF SPEECH?

Classical rhetoricians have traditionally used the term "figures of speech" as a general term to describe any out-of-the-ordinary variation in the meaning of a word **(trope)** or in the arrangement of words **(scheme)**. Quintilian defined a figure as anything "artfully varied from common usage." <> Scholars have labeled over 200 such possible variations with Greek and Latin names. But, today, except for a dozen terms (e.g. **alliteration, assonance, rhyme**) used in analyzing poetry, not much attention is given to these ways of intensifying words. <> **Tropes** commonly seen in advertising include: **simile** (explicit comparison, using like or as: e.g "solid as a rock"); **metaphor** (implicit comparison: e.g. "a tiger in your tank"); **synchedoche** (part stands for the whole: e.g. "wheels" for car); **metonymy** (related attributes: e.g. "bench" for judges; "Wall Street"); **periphrasis** (descriptive phrase instead of a proper name:e.g. "the Real Thing," "the Uncola"); **personification** (giving inanimate things human qualities: e.g. "Charlie" perfume); **apostrophe** (direct address to an absent person: e.g. "You've come a long way, baby."); **onomatopoeia** (sound related: "plop, plop, fizz, fizz"); **oxymoron** (linking contradictories: "cool fire"); **rhetorical question** (indirect statement, no external response expected: "Aren't you glad you use Dial?"); **irony** (saying one thing, but meaning another; context cues needed); **puns** (witty word play on similar sounds or meanings); **litotes** (understatement); and, very common in ads, **hyperbole** (overstatement, exaggeration). <> **Schemes** (word order variations - adding, subtracting, repeating, rearranging elements) commonly seen in ads: **parallelism** and **isocolon** (repeating similarities); **antithesis** and **juxtaposition** (opposing ideas put close together); **climax** (increasing order of importance); **parenthesis** (inserting ideas); **apposition** (adding modifiers); **ellipsis** (omitting items); **anaphora** (repeating openings); **epistrophe** (repeating endings).

COMPOSING
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WHAT FIGURES OF SPEECH?

In exposition, the most commonly used figures of speech are those involving **repetition** (for emphasis), **arrangement** (for coherence), and **comparison** (such as metaphors, similes, and analogies — which have two functions: explanatory and associative). <> Metaphoric language is useful in expository writing to explain the unknown by the known, the unfamiliar by the familiar, or the complex by the simple. For example, a writer might compare the body's unseen inner network of arteries with the commonly seen network of highways. Present situations are often compared metaphorically with an allusion to past events: "He met his Waterloo." Such comparisons are common, useful, and frequently appropriate. Yet, if fully extended into analogies, they may not be totally accurate ("faulty analogy") because exact comparison cannot be made of different kinds of things. <> Metaphoric language also functions as an **association device**: whenever items are linked together, the emotional associations are also transferred. Logically, maybe they "shouldn't." Emotionally, they do. Thus, while "guilt by association" is a formal fallacy, or a logical error, it remains an effective rhetorical tactic. <> You needn't know all the figures of speech by name. Nor do the ad writers who spontaneously write "Hot Diggety Dog" (**tmesis**: interjection of a word between parts of a compound word). But, the more conscious you are that such variations are possible and available, the more control you have over your own writing. And, the more fun you have in enjoying ads.

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WHAT NONVERBALS ARE USED?

Nonverbals include all of the information and feelings which can be conveyed by means of visual images, sounds (music, tone of voice), smells, body language (gestures, facial expressions) backgrounds and contexts. <> Nonverbals imply. They suggest, without explicitly saying anything. By being wordless, they prompt us, as receivers, to co-create. We mentally supply the words. Not only do we "name" the things we see, but we are also set up to add our own evaluative modifiers: "pretty," "friendly," "ugly." <> Certain nonverbals have special symbolic meanings and can trigger a cluster of intense emotional feelings. For example, stirring patriotic and religious music (Sousa marches, church hymns), beloved national shrines and regional scenes (Statue of Liberty, redwood forests), and "home" scenes (Mom serving Thanksgiving dinner) are commonly used because they suggest a whole scenario. <> Products develop "standard" association scenes because they have been effective with target audiences: for example, **beer ads** (male bonding, the "guys" having fun, sports); **soft drinks** ("good times": youth, high energy activity, perky girls); **wine** (lovers, soft music); **car ads** (fast cars, open highways, scenic curves); **food ads** (glistening, mouth-watering close-ups).<> Nonverbals are important. Yet, until now, so little attention has been given to them by scholars, we don't even have a commonly accepted system of names for the various concepts, as we do for the verbal "figures of speech." One result is that even FTC regulators (basically, word-oriented lawyers) have problems in defining nonverbal deception. In practice, it's done on a case-by-case response to specific ads: for example, actors in white-coats may no longer be used in TV ads to give the impression that they are doctors. <> Any message, explicit or implict, can be untrue or deceptive. But, explicit lies are easier to spot and to disprove than deceptive implications which lure or "set up" the audience to insert, erroneously, the untrue part.

COMPOSING
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WHAT NONVERBALS DO YOU USE?

Other than **graphics** (charts, diagrams, maps) used to illustrate or explain, nonverbals are less relevant in most expository writing with its emphasis on information transfer by means of verbal presentation, precision, and denotative words. <> Expository writing, with its need for clarity and coherence, differs from everyday conversation. In speaking, we use nonverbals naturally and spontaneously, often suggesting information and feelings by gestures and facial expressions, tone of voice, pauses and silences. We can clarify ourselves if we get negative feedback ("huh? wadja mean?"). Yet, misunderstandings still happen, even among close friends. In business, to avoid such misunderstandings (to record, to establish responsiblity), we are often asked to "put it in writing." Writing clarifies. <> Ambiguity and multiplicity of meanings are common in nonverbals. For example, a smile could be a nonverbal sign of approval, affection, or friendship; an invitation to intimacy, love, or a come-on; a social pleasantry, an expected formality; a mask, a guise; any or all of the above ! <> Incongruity occurs (a "double message") when the nonverbal message contradicts the verbal. Usually, we see this kind of irony (people smiling while they say or do nasty things) more in real life than in ads because ads usually want to send simple clear messages, not complex confusing ones. (Yet, the Isuzu "liar" ads got attention for violating this norm.) <> Relatively speaking, we get less school training in analyzing nonverbal messages and indirect verbal messages even though they are so common in persuasion and expressive language. Poetry study is usually the only training students get in how to analyze indirect language techniques. Yet, often the links are not made between "traditional" poetry and the "everyday" poetry of our common speech.

Word Lists: "Added Values" Suggested

The **association** technique basically links three elements together: (1) the product or idea, with (2) *something already held favorably, or desired by,* (3) the intended audience. What do people want or desire? Advertisers — and other persuaders — work both from theory and practice. In practice, they take polls and surveys to find out what their target audience already believes, feels, and likes. In theory, they use the psychological studies of various scholars (including Maslow) who have set up classifications of **human needs and wants**,many of which are incorporated in the following 24 categories.

Such categories are *general* and *abstract* (e.g. "sex"); in ads, the actual stimulus will be *specific* and *concrete* (e.g. the smile of a beautiful woman). Variations are common. For example, in ads, the actual "sex" **words** used are usually "soft" (amorous, lover), not as overtly sensual or erotic as the **visuals**. But, whatever the specific variations, the general principles remain: human needs and wants, desires and dreams — and fears and nightmares — are known and predictable. Although ads seldom make direct explicit promises ("you'll be popular and well-liked, if you buy ..."), they often try to imply them indirectly, to suggest such "**added values**," and to trigger these feelings by using suggestive words (including metaphoric language, examples and dramatized stories) and images (or all nonverbals, including backgrounds and context, music and sound, gestures and facial expressions).

Read through these lists. Then, carefully observe an ad, and look for these key words. Itemize what you see: for example, **circle** all of the key words in a magazine ad, or **write a list** as you replay videotaped TV ads. Obviously, you've seen or heard all of these words before, perhaps paying little attention to them. But, if you practice this simple exercise a few times, you will become much more sensitive to certain associations used, their common clusters, and the options chosen by the writer. Furthermore, you'll become much more aware of your own options and word choice as you write.

Food

appealing
appetizing
banquet
chewy
creamy
crispy
crunchy
cuisine
delectable
delicate
delicious
feast
flavorful
full-bodied
gourmet
homecooking
juicy
luscious
mouth-watering
rich
robust
savory
smooth
spicy
sweet
tangy
tempting
tasty
tender
zesty

Activity

action
active
adventure
agile
alert
alive
animated
buoyant
brisk
busy
dynamic
energy
enthusiastic
exciting
lively
nimble
perky
quick
radiant
robust
sparkling
sprightly
spry
thrilling
vibrant
vigor
vital
vivacious
young
youthful

Surroundings

aroma
bundle up
clean
cool
cooling
comfort
comfortable
cozy
ease
environment
feels
fragrant
fresh
livable
mellow
mild
moderate
pleasant
pure
sense
scent
smooth
snug
soothe
soft
touch
unspoiled
warm
warmth
windbreaker

Sex

affectionate
alluring
amorous
attractive
beauty
beautiful
beloved
carnal
desirable
desire
earthy
enticing
erotic
feminine
love
lover
lusty
manly
masculine
passion
passionate
potent
provocative
romance
romantic
seductive
sensual
sexy
stimulating
virile

Health

aids
alleviate the pain
assists
beneficial
benefits
clean
cures
exercise
fit, fitness
growth
hale
hearty
heals
health
healthful
healthy
hygiene
hygenic
improves
relief
relieves
remedy
restores
robust
sanitary
sound
vigorous
well being
well preserved
wholesome

Security

assured
authorized
confident
cover
defend
firm
foresight
guard
guardian
guaranteed
order
peace of mind
prevent
prevention
protect
protection
resist
risk-free
safe
safeguard
safety
secure
security
shield
strong
strength
take care of
tight
withstand
worry free

Economy

afford, affordable
bargain
budget
cheap
discount
earn, earnings
economical
free
frugal
gain
gift
giveaway
inexpensive
invest, investment
just
less than
low cost
money-saving
only
prices cut
prize
profit, profitable
rebate
refund
reduced
sale
save, savings
take advantage of
thrift, thrifty
value

Religion

blessed
certitude
charitable
charity
conscientious
dedicated
devout
devotion
faith
faithful
fervent
godly
guidance
hallowed
holy
honorable
just
piety
pure
respect
right
reverend
righteous
sacred
saintly
truth
virtuous
worship
zeal

Science

analyst
authorities
bionic
clinic
clinically tested
computer
documentation
documentation
electronics
expert
experiment
hospital
institute
laboratory
mechanics
medical
medically proven
methodical
progress
research
scientific
scientists
space age
state of the art
statistics
studies
technical
technicians
technology
tested
theory

Best People	**Most People**	**Average People**
aristocratic	accepted	average
award-winning	admired	common
celebrated	appreciated	common sense
celebrity	assured	customary
champion	bandwagon	down home
cosmopolitan	beloved	equal
cultured	best selling	familiar
elegant	chosen	folk
elite	common	folksy
eminent	commonly	general
esteemed	consensus	genuine
expert	entire	horse-sense
expertise	everyone	hospitality
famed	favorite	main stream
famous	general	medium
fashionable	generally	moderation
illustrious	liked	normal
important	majority	ordinary
leaders	more people	plain folks
leadership	most people	prevelant
noted	polls	public
noteworthy	popular	rank and file
prestige	popularity	regular
prestigious	prevailing	salt-of-the-earth
professional	ratings	simple
renowned	sought after	sincere
significant	total	typical
society	universally	usual
urbane	well liked	well known
winners	widespread	widespread

Neighborhood

- area
- belong
- belonging
- civic
- close
- common
- community
- down home
- downtown
- dwell
- friends
- friendly
- grassroots
- heartland
- home
- home boy
- homecoming
- hometown
- homey
- local
- locale
- locality
- native
- nearby
- neighbor
- neighborhood
- neighborly
- region
- regional
- share

Nation

- (American, etc.)
- allegiance
- citizen
- citizenship
- civic
- country
- devotion
- father land
- free
- freedom
- homeland
- honor
- independence
- land
- liberty
- loyal
- loyalty
- national
- patriot
- patriotic
- people
- pledge
- serve
- service
- sovereignty
- state
- territory
- united

Nature

- animals
- beach
- earth
- farm
- field
- fishing
- forests
- hikes
- idyllic
- lake
- mountains
- nature
- natural
- ocean
- organic
- outdoors
- pastoral
- picnics
- rainbow
- sea
- shore
- shore
- sky
- streams
- sunny
- sunset
- sunshine
- wild
- wilderness
- wildlife
- woods

Intimacy

affinity
attract
beloved
bond
care
caring
closeness
commitment
couples
dear
desire
darling
embrace
feelings
friend
friendly
heartfelt
heartwarming
intimate
love, lover
partners
meaningful
personal
sharing
sweet
tender
touch
thoughtful
trusting
understand

Family

appreciated
care
caring
children
domestic
down home
family
family style
fireside
hearth
home
home grown
home maker
home made
home spun
hospitality
kitchen
love, loved
parental
nurture
protect
responsibility
serenity
secure
sharing
togetherness
tranquil
trust
wanted
warmth

Groups

associate
association
belong
buddies
common
companion
congenial
cooperated
cordial
fellowship
friend
group
guest
harmony
help, helping
hospitality
host
invitation
involved
like
loyal
mutual
outgoing
pals
sociable
team spirit
teamwork
together
united
unified

Esteem

acclaimed
admired
appreciated
approved
champion
cherished
chief
distinguished
dominant
expertise
famous
foremost
hero, heroic
honor, honored
important
influential
leader, leadership
mastery
noted
noteworthy
praise
prestige
prized
prominent
recognized
regarded
respect
revered
success
valued

Play

amuse
amusement
amusing
celebrate
celebration
cheerful
diversion
enjoy
enjoyment
entertain
entertainment
fun, funny
glad
happy
happiness
hilarious
jolly
joy
joyful
merry
party
play
playful
pleasant
pleasing
pleasure
recreate
recreation
refresh
refreshing

Generosity

aid
altruistic
appreciate
appreciated
beloved
benevolent
care
caring
charitable
charity
cherished
delighted
generous
gift
give
gratitude
grateful
help
helping
keepsake
loved ones
pleased
remember
reward
serve
service
share
sharing
treasure
treat

Curiosity

adventure
clever
discover
discovery
educational
engaging
engrossing
explore
exploration
expose
fascinating
find out
inform
informative
ingenious
inquisitive
inside story
intelligent
interesting
intriguing
investigate
learn
learning
news
newsworthy
reveal
revelation
secret
uncover
witty

Creativity

architect
artist
artistic
author
avant-garde
build
composer
composition
craft
craftsmanship
creative
creativity
creator
culture
cultural
design
do
dramatic
energy
imagine
imagination
invent
inventor
make
maker
original
plan
skill
talent
work

Completion

achieve
achievement
accomplish
climax
closure
complete
conclusion
contentment
end
finish
fulfill
fulfillment
goal
graduate
mature
maturity
perform
performance
perfect
perfection
reach
ripe, ripeness
satisfaction
satisfy
solve
solution
succeed
successful
synthesis
whole

ATTENTION-GETTING
CONFIDENCE-BUILDING
DESIRE-STIMULATING
URGENCY-STRESSING
RESPONSE-SEEKING

The more aware you are of the use of urgency-stressing and response-seeking in ads, the more sensitive you will be to their appropriate use in your own composition. <> Creating a sense of urgency is common in some, but not all, advertising. Although basically related to **time**, urgency pleas are often clustered with concepts of **scarcity** (limited quantity) and **availability** (chance, opportunity).<> Urgency appeals are very seldom seen in expository writing because exposition does not seek the same kind of specific response that persuasion does. <> Not all ads use an urgency appeal, nor would it be appropriate in many cases. Standard products often substitute a long-term "**soft sell**" campaign of ads with increased frequency and repetition. "Hard sell" and "soft sell" ads can be expected in different situations. <> **Response** is the goal, the basic intent and the final purpose of persuasion. Some persuasion seeks to make an immediate response easy, to limit our options, and to use triggering words, or simple directives telling us what to do. <> Other persuasion is indirect and preparatory, conditioning for a later response. Some "corporate ads" or "image ads" seek to make audiences "feel good" about the company, to get favorable public opinion on its side (against government regulation, taxes).<> Exposition is often not directed to an immediate specific response, but to an acceptance or assent by the audience, aiding in their understanding. <> Issues relating to various kinds of "**command propaganda**" and "**conditioning propaganda**" point up that the borderlines between information and persuasion are often murky.

ANALYZING
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ANALYZING

IS AN URGENCY PLEA USED ?

Creating a sense of urgency is common in some, but not all, advertising. Although essentially related to **time**, urgency pleas are often clustered with concepts of **scarcity** (limited quantity) and **availability** (chance, opportunity). <> Urgency can be suggested by nonverbals (music accelerating, staccato sounds, ticking clocks, countdowns, images of motion) or by a variety of words. <> Urgency appeals seek emotional response rather than thoughtful contemplation. Although some urgency claims are genuine (real emergencies, actual time limits), many urgency appeals are contrived and artificial, often designed to rush us into something without adequate thought or critical judgment. <> Urgency pleas try to force an issue into a crisis, to narrow the options to two (yes or no, stop or go), to create an either/or situation, often using "crossroads" metaphors. Psychologically, such urgency seeks to increase our anxiety about losing a benefit. <> The five-part pattern of "the pitch" is still the **basic** pattern of advertising even though some ads do not use an urgency plea (#4: "Hurry") or call for a specific response (#5:"Buy"). By trying to apply this full pattern when you analyze ads, the more likely you are to notice when there are variations and omissions. <> Urgency **words** commonly used in advertising include:

> act now, available only, beat the crowd, clearance, deadline, don't delay, final close-out, going fast, hurry, last chance, limited offer, never again, no later than, now is the time, now or never, offer expires, one day only, once in a lifetime, only five left, only 7 shopping days until Christmas, promptness, bonus, rush, sale, time running out, today only.

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DO YOU USE AN URGENCY PLEA?

Urgency appeals are very seldom seen in expository writing because exposition does not seek the same kind of specific response that persuasion does. <> In exposition, perhaps the closest that writers come to an urgency plea is in the attention-getting **warnings** often used in directions and instructional writing ("READ THIS FIRST" "DANGER" "DO NOT TURN SWITCH"—full caps, large type, visual symbols). Note here that this kind of informational urgency is intended to protect the reader, not to persuade. <> In addition to ads, urgency pleas are commonly encountered in political persuasion. Here, urgency is often linked, negatively, with a fearful threat: the more intense the threat, the more urgent the need for a solution — which the persuader offers ! <> Advertisers and politicians, however, are not the only persuaders who make use of the urgency plea. Poets and lovers have traditionally tried to persuade their beloved ones to "seize the day," a *carpe diem* theme common in love lyrics. <> When you write persuasion, be conscious when you do use an urgency appeal, but also be aware that many people feel they're "being hustled" or object to "being pressured" whenever such urgency is used.

ANALYZING ANALYZING ANALYZING

IS URGENCY APPROPRIATE?

Not all ads use an urgency appeal, nor would it be appropriate. Many nationally-advertised products of standard consumer goods (foods, necessities) use a **"soft sell"** effectively, often simply emphasizing pleasant associations (cute kids, good times, nature, sex) with the product. But their ad campaigns compensate by the **frequency** and long-term **repetition** of their ads. Campbell's Soups, for example, have told us for a century to enjoy soup for lunch; a century hence, they still will. Their ads need not be strident or urgent, nor seek instant response. Such advertisers seek long-term repeated use of products and reasonably expect to get a certain percentage of the market. <> Some advertisers claim a kind of moral superiority because they use the "soft sell." But there are many situations in which a relaxed strategy is used because it is simply more effective. For example, sellers of "big ticket" expensive items (homes, autos, major appliances) often encourage their customers to " take your time" or "shop around and compare prices" because most people do comparison shopping for these items anyway. Here, such a "soft sell" helps the seller's image without really losing sales. <> Common situations in which you can expect the urgency appeal and the **"hard sell"** include: when the product is temporary (fads, fashions, entertainments); when the seller is temporary (some Cable TV ads, door-to-door selling, fly-by-night operations, con games); when the buyer is temporary (travelers, newcomers); when a genuine crisis or emergency exists (buyers in pain, illness; sellers in financial trouble); when supply exceeds demand. <> Common situations in which you can expect a **"soft sell"** include: when the product has repeated use (standard foods, clothes); when the seller is permanent (established stores); when the buyer is affluent and sophisticated (thus, expensive stores catering to the rich); when demand exceeds supply.

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IS URGENCY APPROPRIATE?

Much of advertising's bad reputation has been caused by the abuse of urgency appeals, the "hard sell" and the "fast hustle" of unscrupulous fly-by-night operators and pushy salespeople. Urgency appeals have been misused so often that many audiences are mistrustful of them. <> Urgency appeals, therefore, are **very seldom** appropriate in expository writing. If belief, assent, or acceptance is your goal, then avoid anything which weakens your credibility. Just as you want to avoid exaggeration, hyperbole, overstatement, and errors in order to keep your authority and your readers' confidence, so also it helps if you are cool and calm, rather than strident and urgent. Aesop's fable, about the boy who cried wolf, long ago warned that once you lose credibility, it's hard to regain it. Thus, a good rule of thumb is to avoid urgency pleas when doing straight informational writing. If you really feel you "need" such urgency, this might be a clue that you may really be writing persuasion. <> In this book, which links general principles of persuasion and exposition, the pattern is **least** parallel here in this chapter on urgency and response. If persuasion analysis gets more attention here than expository composition does, recognize the wider context: composition skills in exposition — the clarity and coherence needed in recording and communicating information — are vital to any society.

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IS A SPECIFIC RESPONSE SOUGHT?

Response is the goal, the basic intent, and the final purpose of persuasion. Advertising, for example, is meant to sell a product. Some ads may be clever, witty, entertaining or educational, but if they don't sell the product, they are not effective. <> Certainly any "image building" ad, or any "soft sell," or even any pleasant, inoffensive ad could be defended or justified by someone as achieving some kind of vague or unmeasurable goal. But, most commercial advertising is designed to sell specific products, during a specific time, at a specific cost-effectiveness. If this isn't achieved, heads roll. Agencies lose their customers. People lose their jobs. <> Ads usually seek a simple response, such as "buy," or the simple first step of a buying sequence: "Send for..." or "See your dealer..." or " Call (800)...." <> Making the response **easy** is one of the persuader's most important jobs. It's not very useful to call for a difficult, complex, or impossible response. Removing obstacles to a response also includes removing any fears or mistrust; thus, the importance of building confidence in the speakers and the products. <> Persuaders seek to make response easy, to limit our options, and to use triggering words, or simple directives telling us what to do. <> Common response verbs used include:

> act, buy, apply, call (toll free), choose, come to, drink, eat, enclose your check, enjoy, experience, fill out, get, go to, join, mail this card, make your offer, obtain, order, pick up your phone, purchase, register, see your local, select, send for, shop at, smoke, subscribe, taste, use, write.

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DO YOU SEEK SPECIFIC RESPONSE?

Exposition usually does **not** seek an immediate specific response. In exposition, the goal is information-transfer and this information is sometimes a **means**, later, to another end. <> However, in addition to such specific utilitarian purposes, much expository writing transfers information which may have no specific identifiable purpose other than the reader's general understanding of the subject. Yet, such understanding is a vital part of any civilization, and of the "liberal education" of an individual. People need to accumulate and pass on a great deal of information, and a great variety of histories, analyses, and interpretations of events in order to get a broader understanding of a complex world. <> The response that exposition usually seeks is that of assent, belief, and acceptance. Thus, the ideals of accuracy, credibility, and reasonableness can be helped by the clarity and coherence of composition. <> Persuasion is audience-centered, usually seeks a specific response, and is judged on its effectiveness. Exposition is topic-centered, often seeks a more general assent, and is usually judged on its intrinsic merits.

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IS A LATER RESPONSE SET UP?

"Soft sell" ads, without an urgency appeal, as commonly seen in long-term ad campaigns for standard products, do seek a specific later response for consumers to buy products. <> Some ads, however, do **not** seek, explicitly or implicity, for consumers to respond by buying products. For example, many large corporations (Cargil, TRW, Dow, Union Carbide, Dupont, United Technologies, General Dynamics) budget tens of millions of dollars on such "image building" ads, often described by a variety of terms: "corporate advertising," "institutional advertising," PR, "public relations," and "goodwill advertising." <> Such ads are primarily meant to make the public "feel good" about these large corporations (e.g. oil, chemical, space, and weapons industries); to create a favorable climate of public opinion; to reduce public demand for laws, government regulations or corporate taxes; or to counter the negative images of "polluters," "monopolies,""middlemen," "war profiteers," or "merchants of death." <> **Multiple goals** are common in such corporate "image" ads which may seek simultaneously to encourage consumer awareness of their subsidiaries, to build employee morale in-house, and to gain stockholder support. <> Political and legal problems (IRS tax write-offs) occur on the borderlines between corporate "image ads" and "advocacy ads": between ad money spent seeking favorable public opinion, and that seeking public political support for corporate policy or plans (e.g. new weapons systems, offshore oil drilling).

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IS A LATER RESPONSE SET UP?

Expository writers should be aware of some of the interesting issues about the "information" they produce. Exposition, as information-transfer, seems to be so pure and simple, "factual," in comparison to persuasion in which we recognize that the persuader has a bias and a purpose, to get a response. Yet, some analysts believe that **all** communication is essentially persuasion, that the writer seeks the audience's assent or acceptance of the information as fitting into an existing worldview.<> Education, in this view, consists of information which fits into the accepted beliefs and myths of a society. Thus, such information goes unregarded as "propaganda," while opposing views, held by other groups is seen as such. When we hear the term "propaganda," we usually think either of the fist-shaking, name-calling, "agitative command propaganda," or of the insidious indoctrination within other groups. We seldom think of the basic beliefs and values of our own group. In brief: "We educate. They indoctrinate."<> **"Command propaganda,"** as used here, means any organized persuasion which seeks an **immediate** response: for example, most advertising, and most political campaign pleas that we "vote." <> **"Conditioning propaganda,"** as used here, means any organized persuasion which seeks to create or shape public opinion, assumptions, beliefs, attitudes, myths, and worldviews on a long-term basis as the necessary climate or atmosphere for some **future** response. <> Analysts dealing with social and political propaganda have used a variety of terms to discuss concepts related to such subtle long-term conditioning: "political education" (Lenin), "basic propaganda" (Goebbels), "sub-propaganda" (Ellul), "pre-propaganda," "education," "indoctrination," and "consciousness raising." In commercial persuasion, include all the various "public relations" and "image advertising" terms. Furthermore, every government agency, college, and non-profit group has some kind of "information" office to "inform" taxpayers or donors that their money is being well spent, but that more is needed. <> Borderlines between information and persuasion do indeed get murky.

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The more you are aware of what has been omitted from an ad, or downplayed within it, the more sensitive you are as a writer about your own assumptions about the audience and your own omissions of material. <> The basic selection/omission process in writing necessarily omits much more than it includes. All writers have to make **assumptions** about the knowledge and attitudes of their target audience. Based on these assumptions, writers normally omit unneeded information, not relevant to the purpose, or of lesser interest, trivial. <> However, unlike exposition, persuasion involves a **transaction** — including a promising of benefits and a response. It is prudent to expect that persuaders will attempt to downplay the "bad," to omit any disadvantages or problems in the transaction. <> Omissions in ads are hard to detect because there's literally nothing there. But omissions can be discovered by systematically looking for potential **bad effects** and their concealed **causes**, using a traditional pattern of causality **(maker, material, plan, purpose)**. <> In exposition, writers can reduce relevant omissions by using an outline or a checklist. <> Within an ad, sometime information included can be **downplayed** by degree, placement, or indirect language (such as euphemisms, circumlocution, and jargon). <> Omissions and downplaying of relevant information can distort and deceive. In response, some "**disclosure laws**," require ads to put labels and warnings on some potentially dangerous or harmful products. Omissions and disclosures are relevant to many complex legal, political, and ethical issues.

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WHAT DOES THE AD ASSUME?

Advertising makes certain **basic** assumptions that the audience will receive and understand the messages sent. Most ads assume that the intended audience can see, can hear, and can understand the language. Print ads assume also a literacy, which implies a certain degree of education and intelligence. <> Ads also make **cultural** assumptions that the audience has some kind of interest, desire, or need for the product. Old jokes are made about "selling iceboxes to Eskimos," but real ad campaigns are usually well targeted at the appropriate audiences. <> Ads also make some basic assumptions about the **sales transaction** involved: that the item is to be purchased (not stolen or shoplifted), and that the audience has the potency and ability, the means and the money, to buy the product. In the broadest sense, advertising assumes an **affluent society** in which consumers have choice. (Science-fiction scenarios for post-nuclear-holocausts need not include ad agencies thriving in the ruins.) <> Ads targeted at very specific audiences make many assumptions. For example, TV ads about business products (office computers, telephone networks) may use technical jargon not comprehended by everyone in the total television viewing audience, but easily understood by the intended target audience of business people. <> Advertisers spend much time and money on systematic audience analysis ("consumer research") to discover what assumptions can be made about what the audience knows and how the audience feels. <> Ads that assume too little about the audience, and tell us too much, will seem simplistic and "insult our intelligence." If this occurs, we might reflect whether the ad is ineffective, or if we are not the target audience.

WHAT DO YOU ASSUME?

Assertions and **assumptions** are made anytime you transfer information. Some things, you **assert**, or state explicitly; other things, you **assume**, or take for granted. When you write, you usually don't have to start from the beginning ("start from scratch," *ab ovo*). Unconsciously, writers make certain assumptions about their intended audience: for example, that they are able to read English and that there is some "common knowledge" of customs and conventions. In most cases, writers presume a "normality" or "typicality" about their audience. <> The better able you are to **define** and **specify** your audience, the easier it is to make assumptions about what they already know and how they feel about the topic, and what context or background material would be relevant for their understanding. <> **Feedback** helps as a way to check your assumptions about the audience. Try to get someone else to read your draft — from the point of view of the intended audience — and to suggest what could be added for clarity, or deleted because it explains too much. <> Sometimes it helps to specify, by writing notes to yourself, exactly what you do assume about your audience's knowledge and attitudes. For example, if you are writing a paper to be read by a teacher, specify your assumptions about that reader's education, background, and expectations. Although such "psyching out the prof" can be abused ("What does he want?" "What's she looking for?"), at best, it can develop a genuine, conscious awareness of audience expectations. <> In all writing, think about what you can assume, or need not explicitly tell your audience. **Degree is important**: if you assume too little, you may be insulting; assume too much, you may be unclear.

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WHAT DOES THE AD OMIT?

In all writing, the basic selection/omission process necessarily omits more than it includes. Ad writers normally omit unrelated information and unneeded items. Most ads are true, but incomplete. <> Problems occur when ads omit relevant information which may **harm** the consumer. Ads need not present all contrary opinions or available alternatives, but should not conceal actual dangers. However, it is prudent for us to expect that persuaders are likely to downplay the "bad," to omit any disadvantages. Omissions about some dangerous products (unsafe or unhealthy) have already prompted a few consumer "disclosure laws" requiring warnings, labels, and regulations. Many other omissions are less serious and go unregulated, but are still detrimental. For example, some items are inefficient, uneconomical, unneeded, soon outdated or discontinued, have non-standard parts or limited use. <> Omission is very hard to detect because literally there's nothing there: how do you know what has been withheld, concealed, or hidden? Omissions often can be discovered by systematically looking for potential **bad effects** and their concealed **causes**, by using Aristotle's 4-part division of causality. For example, ads can omit the "bad" about: the **efficient** cause (the people involved, the maker, the workers, the manufacturer) such as mismanagement, inexperienced workers, unsanitary cooks, unbonded repairers, unaccredited schools, or insolvency; the **material** cause, such as material being unsafe, unhealthy, poisonous, flammable, fragile, shoddy, substitute, artificial, or adulterated; the **formal** cause (the design or procedures), such as errors or flaws which make it unsafe, unhealthy, inconvenient, uncomfortable, unwieldy, or difficult to use; the **final** cause (the purpose or intended use), such as inherent risk (any blade, flame, or electricity), intrinsic problems (energy-wasting, time-wasting, inefficient, too costly), and unwanted side-effects (such as social disruption or environmental damage).

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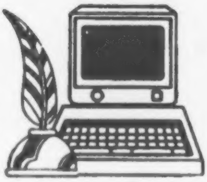

WHAT DO YOU OMIT?

In all writing, the basic selection/omission process necessarily omits more than it includes. All writers make assumptions about their audiences and normally omit unrelated information and unneeded items. <> Omissions relate both to your concept of the subject matter and to your analysis of the audience's knowledge. Do any terms need explaining? Are any parts omitted? Any steps in a sequence skipped? Any context omitted? <> Omissions can be accidental or deliberate. Accidentally you can forget something, or neglect to include information, because of your own unawareness of its need or usefulness. Deliberately, you can omit irrelevant information or suppress relevant material. <> Every writer makes decisions to omit **irrelevant** items. For example, when you do research, usually you gather much more information than you can use. Your task is to reduce this clutter, omit the repetitious and redundant, the trivial and the unrelated, so as to focus more sharply on your important points. <> **Relevant** information varies in different kinds of expository writing. Relevant omissions are most obvious in instructional writing with its goals of clarity, specificity, and usefulness. You can easily recognize the problem of omitting directions and warnings. But it's more difficult to identify how much context is relevant or necessary (for example in history and biography) to create the more general sense of "understanding." Writers have difficult decisions as to what to include and omit when writing about causes and effects, or other complex interrelated issues. <> **Checklists** are useful and common reminders to avoid accidental omissions. Many situations can use generic checklists (e.g. Who, What, When, Where, Why, How), and many textbooks provide more specialized lists for research papers. However, in most cases, it's best to check your finished work against your outline or an itemized listing of your "purpose" and "key points." Have you covered everything you intended?

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WHAT DOES THE AD DOWNPLAY?

Omission is the most common way, but not the only way, persuaders use to downplay the less important and the trivial — and also the problems, the disadvantages, the "bad." <> Other ways to downplay these items include the **degree** of attention (giving something less space, less time, or smaller print), the **placement** (obscure location, far background, middle), and various **language** techniques (such as euphemisms, circumlocution, and jargon) in which words can be deliberately vague, indirect, or confusing. <> **Euphemisms** are "softer words," milder or indirect expressions, substituting for more blunt or direct words. In daily life, some euphemisms (about death, sickness, sexuality) are commonly used, well known, and well understood social conventions. Ads also use commonly understood euphemisms (e.g. "pre-owned car" and "estate jewelry" instead of "used" or "second hand"; "cozy bungalow" instead of "small"). However, sometimes euphemisms can be used deliberately and deceptively to conceal or obscure the "bad." <> **Circumlocutions** (wordy, roundabout, rambling expressions) often downplay the "bad." Although some people are inadvertently confused, disorganized, or wordy, such rambling can be deliberately used to confuse the issue or conceal problems. <> **Jargon** (shop talk, or technical language) may be very appropriate in some situations in which the audience understands the meaning of the words. However, jargon has a bad reputation because there's a long history of pretentious fools and rascals using jargon to impress or to deceive others. <> Many other diversionary tactics can be used to distract attention away from main issues to side issues, to downplay the significant items (e.g. price, quality), to emphasize the trivial (e.g. packaging, color), or to create confusion (e.g. varying prices, sizes, extras, options). <> As a consumer, you need to identify which benefits (e.g. low cost, high quality, large quantity) get your priority, and which are emphasized or downplayed in the ad.

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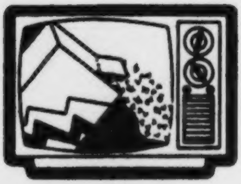
WHAT DO YOU DOWNPLAY?

Expository writing, with clarity as its goal, seeks to emphasize the important things and to downplay the trivial. In general, writers give important things a greater **proportion** and **degree** of time and space than they give to minor points. Furthermore, important items get a better **placement**, usually the beginning or ending. <> Conscious awareness is important. Just as you choose to emphasize or intensify some things (by means of repetition and a whole range of composition tactics), you may also choose to downplay (without entirely omitting) what you consider to be less important (auxiliary but not necessary). <> Audiences may have different interests or priorities. Thus, writer and reader may not agree on what is to be covered, and to what degree. Since you can't cover everything, it's helpful to inform your reader early, not only of your focus, but also of your limits and omissions ("I won't discuss..."). <> Technical and informational writing tends to focus on the subject matter, not on the personal feelings of the writer. These writers downplay subjective opinions, chatty asides, and stylistic embellishments as being inappropriate, not relevant, or distracting. <> When you write persuasion, you are likely to find yourself downplaying the "bad" (the weaknesses and disadvantages of your own position) while intensifying your stronger arguments. Should you? <> The **ethical** issues relating to omission are provocative. Some relevant factors to consider are: Does such omission or downplaying harm or deceive the opponent? Must you reveal your weaknesses? Is it a "fair fight"? Is there an equality, a mutuality, a balance of conflicting interests? What role does intent play? Consequences? Are some language techniques and rhetorical tactics intrinsically "bad"? Neutral?



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SHOULD THERE BE DISCLOSURES?

Political and legal issues are involved in "disclosure law," used here as a general term covering a variety of government regulations such as ingredient labels, hazard and safety warnings, simplification laws ("Truth in Lending"), standardization laws (weights and measures, unit pricing), various audits and reports, and "source" and "access" laws designed to make certain information public knowledge. <> **Conservatives** generally oppose government regulations, arguing that buyers and sellers should have the "free choice" and responsibility to buy and sell whatever they want. Unnecessary regulations burden the seller with "red tape" and ultimately increase the cost to the consumer. <> **Liberals** generally favor government regulations, arguing that the individual consumers need the government to act as their agent to counterbalance the power of the large corporations. Liberals argue that the omission of relevant items (harmful consequences) influences the decision-making process. Free choice must be "informed choice": buyers must have both truthful and adequate knowledge of both the good and the bad. In simple transactions (such as buying vegetables) in which flaws are obvious, buyers don't need much government protection; but, in complex transactions (most manufactured goods), buyers need some warnings about hidden hazards involving the ingredients, design, and process. <> Every "warning" label you see has a history of politics and bitter legal conflict behind it. For example, see Banzhof's book *(Selling Death)* about cigarette warning labels, or read reports of the 1988 controversy about the intrinsic dangers of Honda ATVs. Borderline cases and controversies about potentially harmful omissions are plentiful, especially relating to human nutrition and environmental pollution.

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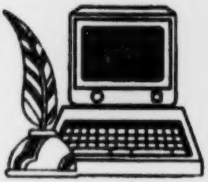

WHAT SHOULD YOU DISCLOSE?

Writing is a **social act** whenever it involves consequences to others. As such, writing involves not only rhetorical issues of what can be done, but also ethical issues about what **should** be done. <> If you were to ***lie***, to make a deliberate false statement, you would be very conscious of what you were doing. Less obvious, however, is the deception and harm caused by omission. (Sissela Bok discusses such ethical issues extensively in her two books, *Lying* and *Secrets*.) Omission of potential problems and dangers, of harmful consequences, can be deceptive and harmful. Omission of relevant information can cause the receiver to misunderstand or misinterpret a situation. <> **Intellectual honesty** is expected in research and in arguments. You should not suppress contrary or contradictory evidence , omit opposing viewpoints and opinions, or set up "straw man" arguments attacking the opponents weakest points and ignoring their strengths. A "fair fight" gives the opponents credit, and seeks to identify the real issues and the specific points of difference. Yet, frequently, people involved in religious and social arguments will suppress evidence not favoring their cause, or omit contrary opinion. Sometimes even scientific researchers will get so emotionally involved in their project, or so financially dependent upon it, that they will ignore, suppress, or destroy contradictory evidence — a serious sin against science. <> Are you omitting anything that will distort the situation? That will mislead or harm your reader?

appendix

This Appendix reprints a set of brief guides useful to analyze predictable language patterns in commercial advertising and political rhetoric. Originally, each essay appeared as a separate **one-page "freebie"** in an 8x11 format designed to be photocopied. Some 50,000 were distributed free to teachers and libraries in order to provide teachers with useful teaching aids which they could incorporate within existing courses.

In order to include as much useful information as possible, certain trade-offs had to be made: the style is terse, severe, often lacking the modifiers, qualifiers, and examples found within normal prose style. Many of these paragraphs are information-rich, tightly written, crammed with ideas, and meant to be "unpacked" by teachers who would add current examples or explain unfamiliar words.

Re-set here in a different format, with adequate white-space and paragraph breaks, this information is more legible and accessible, yet the density of information remains. For example, two of these one-page "freebies" were packed with more than 400 systematically-arranged prompter "Questions You Can Ask" about advertising and political language. Certainly not every reader will want to follow up every diverse question suggested here, but it's helpful to see some of the available options, their scope, and relationships. So pick and choose what you want from this cornucopia of ideas. First, orient yourself:

The Intensify/Downplay Schema is the **most comprehensive** framework to analyze persuasion, verbal or nonverbal. All others materials here are based on this overall structure illustrating the basic concept that when people communicate they **intensify** some things (commonly by means of repetition, association, and composition) and **downplay** others (commonly by means of omission, diversion, and confusion). The schema is non-directive, allowing you to focus on your own interests (e.g. metaphors, euphemisms, whatever), yet providing a structure and an awareness of other options and other possible approaches. The schema incorporates and subsumes some 24 various textbook "lists" (such as the IPA list of "glittering generalities, name-calling, etc.") about language and persuasion techniques.

Questions You Can Ask About Advertising provides more than 200 prompter questions, using the pattern of the Intensify/Downplay schema, to suggest a variety of ways to analyze the language of advertising, to examine what ads say, imply, or omit. The same framework is used with a set of some 200 questions specifically applied to political rhetoric in **Questions You Can Ask About Political Language.**

The 30-Second Spot Quiz is probably the **easiest** way, or the best starting point, to analyze ads (TV, radio, print) by focusing on the overall rhetorical structure, the 5-part pattern of "the pitch." This is a very directive, structured approach (complete with a 1-2-3-4-5 "fingertip formula" mnemonic device) adapted from Cicero's "classical oration" and Aristotle's *ethos*.

Not-So-Great-Expectations contains a set of statements about the **form, content**, and wider **context** of political language in order to encourage more non-partisan analysis. Schools and textbooks say little about the language of politics, simply to avoid any criticism of being called partisan. But, after reading many, many student papers about what they don't like about political language ("it's all lies... they're always arguing... always making promises"), I thought it appropriate to reaffirm, explicitly, some of our unspoken assumptions about free speech, open debate, diversity, and negotiations: the language of a pluralistic democratic society. While schools neglect political language, the media often distorts it. TV news likes to focus on the extremes of dramatic political language (fiery speeches, angry pickets). TV commentators tend to sneer at "deals" being worked out in City Hall or in the State House, often denigrating the idea of negotiations and encouraging a bi-polar "good guys / bad guys" absolutist mentality. In **Not-So-Great Expectations**, these "topics for discussion" suggest various aspects of political language worth serious consideration.

Images & Issues outlines the predictable patterns in election campaign rhetoric, both in the **form** (often, a "pitch"; sometimes, a "pep talk") and in the core **content** which is epitomized by one sentence: **"I am competent and trustworthy; from me, you'll get more good and less bad."** For a more extensive treatment of this, see *The Pep Talk*, or see *English Journal* (December, 1980).

How to Analyze "Cause" Rhetoric demonstrates how the "pep talk" pattern is a useful model to understand the rhetoric often used by "cause" groups. This pattern starts with a feared **threat**, then **bonds** the group for **committed collective action**. Regardless of what "cause," all groups use this same basic rhetorical strategy.

War Propaganda presents a pattern useful to analyze persuasion by any nation (administration, regime; past or present) targeted at its own **home audience.** Another spin-off application of the basic Intensify/Downplay schema, this pattern gives some interesting new ways of looking at a most serious language problem today.

The Intensify/Downplay schema

The Intensify/Downplay schema is a pattern useful to analyze communication, persuasion, and propaganda. All people **intensify** (commonly by means of ***repetition, association***, and ***composition***) and **downplay** (commonly by means of ***omission, diversion***, and ***confusion***) as they communicate in words, gestures, numbers, and so on. But, "professional persuaders" have more training, technology, money, and media access than the average citizen. Individuals can better cope with organized persuasion by recognizing the common ways how communication is intensified or downplayed, and by considering ***who is saying what, to whom, when and where, with what intent and what result.***

INTENSIFY

REPETITION

Intensifying by repetition is an easy, simple, and effective way to persuade. People are comfortable with the known, the familiar. As children, we love to hear the same stories repeated; later, we have "favorite" songs, TV programs, etc. All cultures have prayers, chants, rituals, and dances based on repetition. Advertising slogans, brand names, logos, and signs are common. Much education, training, and indoctrination is based on repetition to imprint on the memory of the receiver to recognize and respond.

ASSOCIATION

Intensifying by association links the (1) the idea or product with (2) something already loved/desired by — or hated/feared by — (3) the intended audience. Thus, there is the need for audience analysis: surveys, polls, "market research," "consumer behavior," psychological and sociological studies to find out what the target audience likes and dislikes. Association can be done by direct assertions or indirect ways (metaphoric language, allusions, backgrounds, contexts, etc.). Some "good" things often linked with products are those common human needs/wants/desires for "basics," "certitude," "intimacy," "space," and "growth."

COMPOSITION

Intensifying by composition uses design, patterns and arrangements, variations in sequence and in proportion, to add to the force of words, images, movements, and so on. How we put the parts together, or compose, is important. For example, in verbal communication, we choose the words, their level of abstraction, their patterns within sentences, and the strategies of longer messages. Our framework of logic, inductive and deductive, puts ideas together systematically. Non-verbal composition choices relate to visuals (color, shape, size); sounds and music, movements, gestures, and facial expressions, and even mathematics (quantities, relationships), and time and space patterns.

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DOWNPLAY

OMISSION

Downplaying by omission is common since the basic selection/ omission process necessarily omits more than can be presented. All communication is limited, is edited, is slanted or biased to include and exclude items. But omission can also be used as a deliberate way of concealing, hiding. Half-truths, quotes out of context, etc. are very hard to detect or find. Political examples include cover-ups, censorship, bookburning, managed news, and secret police activities. Receivers too can omit, can "filter out" or be closed-minded and prejudiced.

DIVERSION

Downplaying by diversion is common by distracting focus or diverting attention away from key issues or important things, usually by intensifying the side-issues, the non-related, the trivial. Common variations include diversionary tactics called "hair-splitting," "nit-picking," "attacking a straw man," and "red herring." Diversions also relate to emotional attacks and appeals (ad hominem, ad populum), plus things which drain the energy of others: "busy work," legal harassment, and so on. Humor and entertainment ("bread and circuses") are used as pleasant ways to divert attention from major issues.

CONFUSION

Downplaying by confusion occurs when issues are made so complex or so chaotic, that people get weary, feel overloaded, and "give up" or "drop out." This is dangerous when people are unable to understand, comprehend, or make reasonable decisions. Chaos can be the accidental result of a disorganized mind, or the deliberate flim-flam of a con man or a political demagogue who then offers a "simple solution" to the confused. Confusion can result from faulty logic, equivocation, circumlocution, contradictions, multiple diversions, inconsistencies, jargon, or anything which blurs clarity or understanding.

QUESTIONS YOU CAN ASK ABOUT ADVERTISING

Commercial advertising is persuasion, designed to stimulate our wants, to focus our desires, and to influence how we spend our limited time and money. Advertising not only uses new technology (TV, computers), but also some old techniques based on psychology and traditional rhetoric. The more you know about the predictable patterns of form and content in advertising, the better prepared you are to make good choices and to avoid wasting your time or money.

EXPECT PEOPLE TO INTENSIFY THEIR OWN "GOOD" BY MEANS OF REPETITION, ASSOCIATION, AND COMPOSITION.

REPETITION is the simplest, most common way of intensifying any message, including commercial advertising. <> In ads: Do you recognize the brand name? trademark? logo? package? What key words are often repeated? What themes or ideas? What images, pictures or symbols? Any slogans, jingles? Any expected predictable scenes, situations, stock characters, stereotypes, cliches? Any *internal* repetition techniques (rhyme, alliteration, anaphora)? <> What **frequency**: how often do you see or hear the ad? What **duration**: how long has it gone on? What **intensity**: how much, how many, how widespread? A blitz, a saturation? (For information on ad campaigns, quantity, cost: see *Advertising Age*) What effects on audience? Do they/you recognize, remember the ads, songs, slogans, brands? <> What technology (printing, recording, computers) is used to repeat, to multiply copies of the message?

ASSOCIATION techniques link (1) the product of service, with (2) something **already liked or desired by** (3) the intended audience. Thus, the importance of market research ("consumer behavior" surveys, polls; "demographics" targeting specific audiences) to find out what the audience already likes. <> Does the ad link the product with "good feelings" associated with predictable human needs, wants, desires? For example, any links with **basic needs** (food, activity, sex, security)? With desire to save or gain **money**? With desire for reassurance or **outside approval** (from religion, or science, or the "best people," or the "most people," or the "average people")? With desire for a sense of space, **territory** (neighborhood, nation, nature)? With desire for **love and belonging** (intimacy, family, groups)? With **other** human desires (esteem, play, generosity, curiosity, creativity, completion)? <> "Scare-and-sell" ads stir up negative associations with things already hated or feared (problems, dangers, pains) then present the product as a solution to the problem. <> Are associations explicitly stated, or implicitly suggested (e.g. using metaphoric language, visual images, backgrounds, music)? <> Are the speakers (models, endorsers) **authority figures**, people you respect, admire, and trust? (Such as in the image of a kind, nurturing "Mom" or a wise, benevolent "Dad.") Or are they **friend figures**: people you'd like as your friends, or even "cute" cartoons or animals?

COMPOSITION involves the whole putting-together process of purposeful words and images appropriate to the intent, situation, and audience. <> In ads, the basic strategy of "the pitch" can be summarized in a 1-2-3-4-5 fingertip formula: HI, TRUST ME, YOU NEED, HURRY, BUY. <> Ask: (1) What are the **attention-getting** words and images? (2) What are the **confidence-building** techniques: words, images, smiles, brand names, voice tones, endorsers? (3) What **desire-stimulating** techniques are used? Usually this is the main part of an ad. Consider: Who is the target audience? What benefits do they seek: To get a "good" (**acquisition**)? To keep a "good" (**protection**)? To get rid of a "bad" (**relief**)? To avoid a "bad" (**prevention**)? Are there **product claims**, as key selling points (intrinsic claims such as: *superiority, quantity, beauty, efficiency, scarcity, novelty, stability, reliability, simplicity, utility, rapidity, safety* —stated or suggested in various words and images)? Are "**added values**" suggested by *association* of the product with things already desired or liked by the target audience? (4) Are there **urgency-stressing** techniques used? Or is it a "soft sell"? (5) What **response-seeking** techniques are used? Any triggering words (buy, join, call) used? If not, is it "image-building" conditioning us to "feel good" about a company?

EXPECT PEOPLE TO DOWNPLAY THEIR OWN "BAD" BY MEANS OF OMISSION, DIVERSION AND CONFUSION.

OMISSION, something not said or done, is very hard to detect. Most ads are true, but incomplete. Ads need not present all contrary opinions or other available options, but should not conceal actual dangers. <> Informed critics and competitors are likely to note relevant omissions, but anyone can systematically analyze omissions. Look first for possible **bad effects** and their related **causes**. What disadvantages, drawbacks, hazards have been omitted from the ad? Any unwanted, harmful, **side-effects**: unsafe, unhealthy, uneconomical, inefficient, unneeded? Are there any concealed problems concerning the **maker**, the manufacturer? The **materials** used? The **design**? Is the **purpose** or the use of the product harmful to the user, or to others? <> Does any "disclosure law" exist (or is any needed?) requiring public warnings about concealed hazards? <> In the ad, what gets less time, less space, or less attention?

DIVERSION occurs when time, effort, or money is spent on trivial things, on **side-issues** instead of on the **main issue**. But, people often do not agree on what are the main issues, or on priorities. <> What benefits (e.g. high speed, low cost) get high priority in the ad's claims and promises? Are these *your* priorities? <> Is there any "bait-and-switch"? For example, when the ad stresses one benefit — such as "low cost" — but, in the actual sales transaction, the seller switches to another priority — the "high quality" of a more expensive item. <> Does an ad divert focus from key issues or important things (e.g. nutrition, health, safety)? <> With "parity products" (basically the same ingredients), does an ad focus on side-issues or unmeaningful trivia? <> Does an ad divert attention from your other choices: to buy something else, to rent, to borrow, to share, to use less, to use less often, to do without? Ads need not show your other options, but you should be aware of them.

CONFUSION, whether caused by accidental error or deliberate deception, can hide or obscure disadvantages or potential problems. <> Are any words unclear, uncommon or unfamiliar? Are technical words (jargon), vague generalities, ambiguous words, or euphemisms used inappropriately to conceal the "bad"? Are statements too wordy, indirect, or rambling? Are examples representative, typical, and sufficient? Are comparisons within the same category? Are there any inconsistencies or contradictions? Any factual errors? Are there frequent changes, revisions, or variations (in price, size, extras, options, contents, packages)? Is anything too complex, or have too many parts? Is anything disorganized, incoherent, or chaotic? Are there any confusing statistics, numbers, schedules, or prices? <> Are the benefits and risks clear? Are *your own* goals, priorities, and desires clear or vague? Fixed or shifting? Confusion can exist within us as well as in an ad. <> Confused? Slow down, sort out.

QUESTIONS YOU CAN ASK ABOUT POLITICAL LANGUAGE

Citizens in a democracy need to be better informed, not only about the content (the specific issues) but also about the form (the predictable patterns). This list systematically suggests many ways to analyze political language (including nonverbals, omissions and related actions). From these, observers can select a focus appropriate to their intent and to the situation.

EXPECT PEOPLE TO INTENSIFY THEIR OWN "GOOD" (AND, IN AGGRESSION, TO INTENSIFY OTHERS' "BAD") BY MEANS OF REPETITION, ASSOCIATION, AND COMPOSITION.

REPETITION is the simplest, most common way of intensifying any message, including political rhetoric. <> What key words are often repeated? What themes or ideas? What images, pictures, or symbols? What names? What slogans are used? Any internal repetition techniques (e.g. rhyme, alliteration, anaphora) within the phrasing? What cliches, and stock responses, can be expected in various situations? What repeated activities (e.g. rituals, customs, traditions) are used or known within the group? <> What **frequency** is the repetition: how often do you see or hear it? What **duration:** how long has it gone on? What **intensity**: how many, how much? A blitz, a saturation? <> What effects on the audience? Does the audience recognize and remember? <> What technology (printing, recordings, computers) is used to repeat, or to multiply copies?

ASSOCIATION techniques link (l) the person — the party, or policy, or product, with (2) something **already liked or desired** by (3) the intended audience. (Or, in attacks, with something **already hated or feared.**) Thus, surveys and polls are important to find out what the audience already likes and dislikes. <> Such associations can trigger intense emotions and feelings. Most obvious include any flag-waving, God-on-our-side, or "plain folks" links. Less obvious include links with any human want, need, or desire. <> Are there **explicit**, direct assertions of affiliation or membership ("I am...I belong to")? Of tastes or opinions ("I like...I believe in")? Are there **implicit**, indirect suggestions: using music, colors, flags, symbols, backgrounds? Background associations often include choice: of *companions* (advisors, friends, celebrities, spouse); of *locales* (historic sites, shrines, beautiful scenery); of *events* ("good times" — festivals, fairs; "bad times" — disaster relief). <> Any metaphors or analogies (e.g. suggesting links to sports, war, nature)? Any "name-dropping":patriotic, religious, literary, or historical allusions?

COMPOSITION involves the whole putting-together process of purposeful words and images appropriate to the intent, situation, and audience. <> What are the key content **words** — nouns (person, places, things, concepts) and verbs (actions)? The related adjectives and adverbs? <> What positive **claims** about self, or negative **charges** about others, are made? Are they explicitly stated? Implicitly suggested? What generalities? What specifics? What absolutes (e.g. "it is...")? What qualifiers ("perhaps...maybe")? What hypotheticals or conditionals ("if...then")? What figures of speech: Metaphors? Rhetorical questions? Hyperbole (overstatement)? Litotes (understatement)? Puns? Irony? <> What **nonverbals** (e.g. smiles, frowns, tone of voice, backgrounds)? <> What sentence patterns are used: Balanced, parallel structures? Climactic order? <> How are the larger structures (paragraphs, essays) organized? Are ideas clear and coherent? What openers, closers, transitionals? What sequence of ideas? What proportion? What emphasis? What overall strategy? What wider context?

EXPECT PEOPLE TO DOWNPLAY THEIR OWN "BAD" (AND, IN AGGRESSION, TO DOWNPLAY OTHERS' "GOOD") BY MEANS OF OMISSION, DIVERSION, AND CONFUSION.

OMISSION, something not said or done, is very hard to analyze. Look first for possible **bad effects** and their related **causes**: what disadvantages, drawbacks, or hazards have been omitted? Are there any unwanted, harmful **side-effects**: unsafe, unhealthy, uneconomical, inefficient, unneeded? <> Any relevant omissions about the **people** involved, concealing unworthiness (crimes, scandals),or incompetence (mistakes, failures, ignorance), or being secretly allied with others? Any concealed "conflicts of interest"? Any hidden bias, favoritism, or nepotism? Any relevant omissions about proposed **plans, programs, or policies**? (e.g. any cover-ups hiding past errors, carelessness, neglect, cost overruns, options ignored, criticism suppressed? Any concealment of future risks or potential dangers? What issues get less time or less attention? Totally ignored? Any omissions about intended **purpose**? Any ulterior motives, "hidden agendas"? Any concealed benefits or payoffs which will go to supporters now or later? Any secret agreements, "backroom deals," under the table bribes, favors exchanged? Any illegal or immoral covert actions? Any censorship or restriction of contrary views? Any suppression of contradictory evidence? <> Any euphemisms used to hide, or to lessen a "bad"? Any "half-truths" used to distort or to conceal? Any omissions about the merits of the opposition?

DIVERSION occurs when time, effort, or money is spent on unimportant issues or trivial things, on **side-issues** instead of the **main issue.** But, people often do not agree on what are the main issues, or on the **priorities, mix**, and **degree** of support when several issues are involved. Identify or stipulate the priorities: What's most important? Least? Most beneficial? Most harmful? (For you, for others?) <> In politics, people often agree in general about the ends or goals (peace and prosperity), but disagree about specifics, the means, the best way, priorities, mix, or degree (the "guns or butter" debate).<> Arguments so often get "side-tracked" that many diversionary tactics have traditional names: Are there *ad hominem* attacks against the person, instead of the issue? *ad populum* appeals, focusing on the audience's emotional feelings (stirring up "gut issues"—fears, anxieties; hopes, desires)? *ad misericordium* appeals by the speaker ("poor me") for pity or sympathy? "Pointing to another wrong"? Evasions, steering clear, changing the subject away from problems? Alibis, excuses? "Red herrings" — false trails, noisy distractions? Is there an emphasis on a minor "good" — style over substance, cosmetic superficialities? In attacks, is there "nit-picking" and "hairsplitting" about petty items? Any "attacking a straw man" — focusing on an easy, minor point? Any pleasant distractions — humor, jokes, "bread and circuses"?

CONFUSION, whether caused by accidental error or deliberate deception, can hide or obscure potentially harmful items. <> Are any words unclear, uncommon, or unfamiliar? Are technical words (jargon), vague generalities, ambiguous words, or euphemisms used inappropriately to conceal the "bad"? Are there shifting definitions (equivocations)? Are statements too wordy, indirect, roundabout, or rambling? <> Are examples representative? Typical? Sufficient? <> Are comparisons within the same category? Are analogies clear and appropriate? Are there any irrational statements, illogical acts, invalid linking of ideas, or *non sequiturs*? Are there any inconsistencies or any contradictions within the text, or with past words and deeds? Any "double messages" (verbal/nonverbal incongruence)? Any factual errors? <> Are there frequent or constant changes, variations, or revisions (in plans, reports, purposes, etc.)? Are statistics (& charts, graphs, computer printouts) accurate, clear, and meaningful? Are estimates (of unknowns, future forecasts) reasonable, probable, and based on reliable evidence? <> Are systems too complex: too many parts, processes, or intersections? Are things disorganized, incoherent, chaotic, out of sync? <> Are potential benefits and risks clear? Are goals and priorities clear or vague, fixed or shifting? Do people feel confused, overloaded, weary, burned out? Does anyone offer an easy answer or a simple solution ("trust me") to solve a complex problem?

THE 30-SECOND SPOT QUIZ

Use this 1-2-3-4-5 sequence of questions, based on the pattern of "the pitch" to focus on the skeleton underneath the surface variations of radio and TV commercials, newspaper and magazine ads.

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1. What ATTENTION-GETTING techniques are used?

Anything unusual? Unexpected? Noticeable? Interesting? Related to:

senses: motions, colors, lights, sounds, music, visuals (e.g. computer graphics, slow motion)

emotions: any pleasant associations suggested? (e.g. sex, scenery, exciting action, fun, family, pets)

thought: news, lists, displays, claims, advice, questions, stories, demonstrations, contests. (Popular TV **programs** function as attention-getters to "deliver the audience" to advertisers.)

2. What CONFIDENCE-BUILDING techniques are used?

Do you **recognize**, know (from earlier repetition) the brand name? company? symbol? package?

Do you **already know, like, or trust** the presenters: the endorsers, actors, models?

Are these presenters **authority figures** (expert, wise, protective, caring)? Or, are they **friend figures** (someone you like, or like to be, "on your side" — including "cute" cartoons)?

What key **words** are used? (trust, sincere, etc.) **Nonverbals**? (smiles, voice tones, sincere look)

In mail ads, are computer-written "personalized" touches used? On telephones: tapes? scripts?

3. What DESIRE-STIMULATING techniques are used?

Main part of ad: consider **(a) "target audience"** as **(b) benefit-seeking;** and persuaders benefit-promising strategies as focused on **(c) product claims**, or **(d) "added values"** associated with the product.

a. Who is the "target audience"? Are you? (If not, as part of the unintended audience, are you uninterested or hostile toward the ad?)

b. What's the primary motive of that audience's benefit-seeking?

Use this chart. Most ads are simple **acquisition** (lower left). Often several motives co-exist, but one may be dominant. Ads which intensify a problem (that is, a "bad" already hated or feared; the opposite or absence of "goods") and then offer the product as a solution are here called '**scare-and-sell**' ads.

To keep a "good" ***(protection)***	**To get rid of a "bad"** ***(relief)***
To get a "good" ***(acquisition)***	**To avoid a "bad"** ***(prevention)***

c. What kinds of product claims are emphasized?

What key words? Images? Any measurable claims? Or are they subjective opinions, generalized praise words, "puffery"? Use these 12 general categories ("words" are samples of many possible)

Superiority ("best")
Quantity ("most")
Efficiency ("really works")
Beauty ("lovely")
Scarcity ("rare")
Novelty ("new")
Stability ("classic")
Reliability ("solid")
Simplicity ("easy")
Utility ("practical")
Rapidity ("fast")
Safety ("safe")

d. Are any "added values" implied or suggested?

Are there words or images which associate the product with some "good" already loved or desired by the intended audience? With such common human needs/wants/desires as in these 24 categories:

"Basic" needs:
Food ("tasty")
Activity ("exciting")
Surroundings ("comfort")
Sex ("alluring")
Health ("healthy")
Security ("protect")
Economy ("save money")

"Certitude" needs:
Religion ("right")
Science ("research")
Best People ("elite")
Most People ("popular")
Average People ("typical")

"Territory" needs:
Neighborhood ("hometown")
Nation ("country")
Nature ("earth")

"Love & Belonging" needs:
Intimacy ("lover")
Family ("Mom," "kids")
Groups ("teamwork")

"Growth" needs:
Esteem ("respected")
Play ("fun")
Generosity ("gift")
Creativity ("creative")
Curiosity ("discover")
Completion ("success")

4. Are there URGENCY-STRESSING techniques used?
(Not in all ads, but always check.)

If an urgency appeal: what **words** are used? (e.g. hurry, rush, now, deadline, sale, offer expires)

If **no** urgency: is this a **"soft sell"** — part of a repetitive long-term ad campaign for a standard item?

5. What RESPONSE-SEEKING techniques are used?

Are there specific **triggering words** used? (e.g. buy, get, do, act, join, smoke, drink, taste, call 800).

If **not**, is it **conditioning** ("public relations" or "image building") to make us **feel good** about the company, to get favorable public opinion on its side (against government regulations, taxes)?

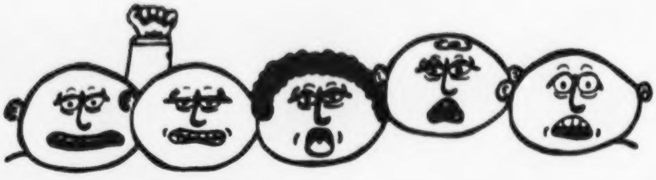
Persuaders always seek some kind of response.

NOT-SO-GREAT-EXPECTATIONS

Too many people get disillusioned by political language because they start with illusions about it — erroneous ideas and unrealistic expectations. It's better to start with realistic attitudes, practical information, and not-so-great-expectations.

- Expect **conflict**, arguments, disagreements. If you believe in freedom, then expect dissent. Silence, lack of opposition, is often the sign of imposed dictatorship.
- Expect **compromises**, concessions, trade-offs, deals. Most issues are negotiable, but some (dealing with principles or absolutes) may not be. Define the areas in which negotiations are possible for you.
- Expect very few clear cut **choices** between "good" and "bad." Most problems involve the greater-of-two-goods, or the lesser-of-two-evils; most arguments are about degree(how much) or priority (what should be done first).
- Expect people to agree about **general goals** (We all seek the "good"), but to disagree about **specific means**. Expect politicians to use generalities so that their audiences will imagine their own specifics.
- Expect most political language to be **persuasion** (not coercion) using words (not weapons) to get others to do something: to vote for, to support, to agree with — the politician, the party, or the policy.
- Expect persuasion to be a **mutual transaction** between benefit-promisers and benefit-seekers. Expect all people to be **benefit-seekers;** expect all persuaders to be **benefit-promisers**. Advertisers usually offer individual benefits ("You'll be happy, beautiful, beloved ... if you buy XYZ") and politicians offer social benefits ("We'll have peace, prosperity, lower taxes, more employment ... if you support XYZ").
- Expect politicians to make certain **claims** about themselves. Basically, they seek to project the image of being **trustworthy, competent**,and **benevolent**("on your side"). In attacks, the charges are that opponents are **untrustworthy, incompetent**,and **not on-your-side** (either self-seeking or serving "special interests").
- Expect **self-righteousness** in conflicts. Advocates often claim **knowledge** and **virtue** for self, and charge opponents with **ignorance** (unintentional, misguided, dupes) or **malice** (intentional, evil, plots, conspiracies).
- Expect **one-sided** arguments. When people advocate their own position (policy, party, candidate), they will intensify their own "good" and downplay their own "bad."
- Expect people to **downplay their own "bad"** by omitting unfavorable information, by using "softer" language (euphemisms), by diverting attention, or by obscuring it with jargon, confusing words, or complicated statistics.

- Expect persuasive messages starting with a **problem** (a threat feared) will end by offering a **solution** ("do this... vote for that"). Expect problems to be intensified during election campaigns, and at budget times: the greater the problem, the more the need for the solution.
- Expect, from the **Haves**, a conservative rhetoric stressing **protection** (keep the "good") and **prevention** (avoid the "bad").
- Expect, from the **Have-Nots**, a progressive rhetoric stressing **relief** (change the "bad") and **acquisition** (get the "good").
- Expect many political messages to be simple **repetition** of names, pictures, key words, symbols, and slogans. Such items often trigger a cluster of associated ideas.
- Expect common use of the **association** technique, which links (1) the person, party, or policy with (2) something **already loved or desired by** (3) the intended audience. (In attacks: with something **already hated or feared.**) Thus, surveys and polls are important to find out what the target audience already likes and dislikes.
- Expect that ideals of accuracy and truth are not always reached: at times, people — including politicians — can make **errors**, be **uninformed**, or deliberately **deceive**.
- Expect no sure or simple test for "truth": **any** statement can be a lie; **any** behavior can be deceptive; **any** person can deceive or be deceived.
- Expect people in power to **intensify their own "good,"** usually by means of a large "public relations" or "information" department. From the press releases of the White House, the State House, and City Hall, expect the only news to be "good news."
- Expect **money** to play a major role in human activities, including persuasion and politics."Follow the dollar" is good advice for investigators seeking to trace power, analyze budgets, or expose corruption.
- Expect to see some **slick**, well-planned, conscious, purposeful persuasion from some sources, but also some random, **strident**, irrational and crazy talk from others sources. Not all people are wired the same; some have a few loose screws !
- Expect **your own** attitudes to develop or change as you have more experience, more knowledge, and more understanding of history, sociology, and psychology.
- Expect it to be **difficult** (sometimes impossible) to sort things out, clarify issues, understand each other, set priorities, or resolve conflicts. Yet, such constant efforts are vital to a free, democratic society.



HOW TO ANALYZE "CAUSE" RHETORIC

Some persuasion involves simple sales transactions: most ads simply want individuals to buy products. Other persuasion seeks **committed collective action**: for us to join with a group to do something. Whether it's a coach giving such a "**pep talk**" to stir up and direct the energies of a team, or whether it's a political agitator, such "cause" rhetoric (commonly used by **any** group, **any** cause, **any** side) often follows a predictable four-part pattern: (1) a **THREAT** of something bad, exciting our fear or anger; (2) a **BONDING** together of the group, stressing ideas of unity, loyalty, and quality; (3) for an altruistic good **CAUSE**, a goal opposing the bad; (4) leading to a **RESPONSE**, doing specific actions. To analyze "cause" rhetoric, sort out the parts using this basic four-part pattern of the "**pep talk**":

1. THREAT

Threats are very emotionally intense, using **name-calling** (attack words), "**horror stories**"(narratives), and "**atrocity pictures**"(visuals). <> People have **predictable fears** (in categories such as: ***death, destruction, dominance, invasion, restriction, inequality, chaos***) which can be excited by persuaders on all sides in a conflict, stirring up feelings of righteous anger and revenge. <> Persuaders have predictable tactics. **Direct** conflicts are fairly easy to analyze. For example, in territory disputes (invasion), those who **have** possession of the land emphasize protection (Defend! Save!) and stir up fear of loss to bond their group. The **have-nots** who also claim the land, to bond their group, stir up anger at unjust deprivation, and call for change or revenge. <> But, many conflicts are **indirect** or oblique. Although both sides may see themselves as being right,they are focused on different issues and have different premises, priorities, and goals. <> To help clarify, identify and sort out the various aspects of the threat, ask:

> What is the threat? **Identify** what is feared or provokes anger.

> What **kind** of threat? Classify, or **categorize** it (e.g. death, destruction, dominance, invasion, restriction, inequality, and chaos — are the 7 major categories used in *The Pep Talk*) so that you become more aware of the cluster of predictable words and images commonly used in such situations.

> Is it a **direct** conflict, head-on against the other side? (e.g. territory disputes)

> Or is it an **indirect**,oblique conflict, with the sides emphasizing different threats? (e.g. in the abortion controversy) What does each side say is the key issue?

> **Name-calling**: What attack words are used to describe the foe?

> Does this foe have an evil leader?

> Are the people on the other side **evil**? Or uninformed, **misguided**?

> **Horror stories & atrocity pictures**: What narratives and visuals, what stories and scenes (including rumors, movies, TV newsclips) are used to show the evil deeds? (True or false, genuine or not, such scenes — especially showing dead or bloody victims — are very effective to trigger emotional responses.)

Get Together!

2. BONDING

Bonding rhetoric is used to bring a group together, keep it together, and build pride. In all groups, three key common themes are **unity** ("united we stand"), **loyalty** ("be true to your ..."), and **pride** (of being right, or being best: "We're Number One").

> Are there words or slogans stressing **unity, loyalty**, and **pride**?

> Are there words calling for specific **bonding actions** (e.g. to join, enlist, support, give, donate, stand up for)

> Are symbolic **nonverbals** used for bonding? (e.g. uniforms, colors, flags, music — especially religious and patriotic)

> Are there group bonding **activities**? (e.g. cheering, singing, marching, picketing, demonstrating)

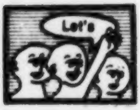
3. CAUSE

Cause rhetoric involves the ideas of **duty**, **defense**, and **altruism**. People justify their involvement in group effort by a sense of their obligation to defend another: either the group (e.g. nation, homeland, religion) or someone weaker, or unable to defend one's self (e.g. children, unborn, animals, environment, the poor). <> The "good" sought will be the reverse of the threat feared; this goal will be expressed either in terms of general concepts (e.g. victory, peace, prosperity, life, liberty, equality, justice) or specific issues.

> **Who** is being defended? The group? Someone weaker?

> **What** is the "good" sought? In general terms? In specifics?

> Are there **duty** words used? (e.g. duty, job, task, mission, obligation, responsibility; should, must, ought to)



4. RESPONSE

Response is the ultimate goal of this whole process of persuasion. After the emotional energies have been stimulated, organized together in a bonded group, and directed at a goal, the persuader tries to trigger a response, a specific action: **fight, keep, change, seize, stop, go, up with, down with** — whatever is appropriate. <> Urgency and extremity words are often used: "now or never... we've had enough ... last straw... breaking point."

> What **specific action** is sought?

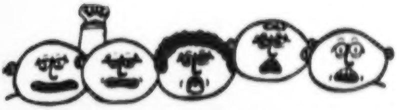
> Are **urgency** or **extremity** words used?

> Is this primarily **conservative** rhetoric?

(**Protection** & **prevention:** to keep the "good" and avoid the "bad.")

> Is this primarily **progressive** rhetoric?

(**Relief** & **acquisition**: to get rid of the "bad" and get the "good.")



Common problems in analyzing "cause" rhetoric:

It's hard to be cool, calm, and rational with words and images which are often **deliberately designed** to incite, inflame, stir the emotions, or make people angry or afraid.

Unlike ads (usually complete "packages"), we often see only **bits and fragments** of "cause" rhetoric: slogans, pickets signs, rumors, brief TV shots, or quotes. Sometimes we see these fragments **out of sequence**, thus this "pep talk" pattern is a useful framework to sort out and organize the chaos.

Expect **surface variations**, many different specific ways of saying or suggesting the same basic concepts. Inconsistency is common. People use many different phrasings, definitions, and meanings for things, and often change focus or shift premises. Observers need to be alert and flexible, seek dominant impressions, and avoid pigeon-holing.

Persuasion analysis is **not** always popular, especially with the persuaders (who want response, not analysis), or with groups seeking unquestioning response from their members.

Knowing this pattern of the "pep talk" doesn't tell us who is "right," what claims and charges are "true," what evidence is reliable, nor what to do. But we can better recognize and understand the rhetoric used by any group — both those to which we belong and those we oppose. We may defend ourselves from being deceived or exploited by others, or from being self-righteous or narrow-minded. From our understanding of how people on "the other side" see their roles, we may gain tolerance, perhaps even compassion.

IMAGES & ISSUES

How to Analyze Election Rhetoric

People often complain vaguely about political language ("it's all promises ... all lies ... too confusing") or ignore it and drop out, because they don't understand some basics. Appreciate free elections: using words and images (not force and violence), persuaders seek support for themselves and their ideas.

Prepare yourself to analyze political language in a non-partisan, common sense way. We don't know in advance whether a message is true or not, beneficial or not, cogent or not; but, we do know some predictable patterns in content and form.

CONTENT. The core message of a candidate can be basically summarized as: **"I am competent and trustworthy; from me, you'll get more good and less bad."** This one sentence contains three claims (**competent, trustworthy,** and **benevolent** — as in Aristotle's ethos) and a promise of benefits.

If politicians are "always promising," remember that **we** are always **benefit-seeking**. No matter how we define "good" and "bad," we want to get and to keep the "good" and to avoid or to change the "bad." Thus:

> Expect from the Haves, a **conservative rhetoric**, stressing protection (keep the "good") and prevention (avoid the "bad").

> Expect from the Have-Nots, a **progressive rhetoric**, stressing relief (change the "bad") and acquisition (get the "good").

Conservative rhetoric, as used here, is the rhetoric of the Haves who seek **to keep the "good"** (protection) and **to avoid the "bad"** (prevention). It is the rhetoric of the Establishment, defending the *status quo*, justifying the way things are. Generally this is the rhetoric of the current administration (whoever is in the White House, the State House, and City Hall); of corporations, organizations, and government bureaucracies; of those people who have control and power. Conservative rhetoric stresses satisfaction, contentment, appreciation, and enjoyment of the existing "goods"; pride in the group, its past history, traditions, and heroes; and in its present accomplishments and leaders. Conservative rhetoric encourages the self-image of being a defender of the society (the nation, the culture, the faith). Warnings, precautions, and anxieties are focused on the main threat: the *fear of loss* — either suddenly (by seizure, by being overwhelmed or conquered) or slowly (by decay, attrition, or infiltration). It is reasonable to expect that people who have a "good" will want to keep it, and to avoid the "bad" of losing it or having it taken away.

Progressive rhetoric, as used here, is the rhetoric of the Have-Nots who seek **to change the "bad"** (relief) and **to get the "good"** (acquisition). It is the rhetoric of dissatisfaction, discontent, and anger for not having the "good"; it is also the rhetoric of hopes, dreams, change, progress, and improvement. It not only attacks the existing evils, but also holds out hope for a better future. Generally, this is the rhetoric of the opposition, the Outs, the protesters and the picketers, the people not in power. Progressive rhetoric ranges from reformers, who want to change or fix up parts of the existing system, to revolutionaries who want to destroy it and replace it with a better one. Progressive rhetoric stresses the problems of the existing order and criticizes the caretakers, especially for corruption (intentional) or incompetence (unintentional). Progressive rhetoric encourages the self-image of being a defender of the poor (the unfortunate, the underprivileged, the victims). In addition to the specific problem involved, progressive rhetoric often suggests fears of *stasis* (being stopped, stalled, thwarted), either suddenly (banned, controlled) or slowly (exhausted, burned out). It is reasonable to expect that people who have a "bad" will want to get rid of it, and to get the "good."

Persuaders often "make problems." To an audience of Haves, conservative persuaders stir up fears and anxieties of loss; to an audience of Have-Nots, progressive persuaders stir up discontent and dissatisfaction with an existing "bad," or anger and resentment for being deprived. After stirring up these fears and hatreds, persuaders often try to bond their group together, then direct and trigger their energies toward a specific action.

FORM. The "**pitch**" and the "**pep talk**" are terms used here to describe two commonly seen patterns of persuasion, the structure underneath most messages.

The "**pitch**" is basically a five-part strategy, usually seen in commercial advertising, but also common in political ads. To focus on this pattern, ask these questions:

1. What attention-getting techniques are used?

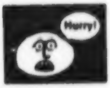
Often, simple repetition for name recognition; thus, many posters, buttons, TV spots.

2. What confidence-building techniques are used?

The goal is to project the "image" of being competent, trustworthy, and benevolent. Note the smiles, handshakes, sincere looks, the endorsements, and the patriotic associations.

3. What desire-stimulating techniques are used?

Conservatives and progressives emphasize different aspects, stimulating either desires for "goods" or fears of "bads." Commercial ads focus on specific individual benefits, whereas most political ads stress general social benefits (e.g. peace, prosperity, honest and efficient government). Everyone agrees on these as general goals, but disagrees about specific means to them.



4. Are there urgency-stressing techniques used?

Common in campaigns; sometimes an intense "now-or-never, before it's too late" plea.

5. What response is sought?

Often, simply to vote for the person or party.

The "**pep talk**" seeks ***committed collective action***. It's less common, but more intense, stirring emotions of fear and anger, as in party rallies, single-issue or "cause" groups, war propaganda, and in targeted direct-mail ads. The "pep talk" usually has a four-part pattern of Threat, Bonding, Cause, and Response. To focus on this pattern, ask these questions:

1. What is the threat feared?

The danger? The possible loss? Who are the foes? The victims? The warning-givers? What "horror stories" are told?

Get Together!

2. What words and nonverbals are used in bonding the group?

Sometimes meetings, rallies, marching, singing, or cheering stressing unity, loyalty, and pride ("We're Number 1 !")

3. What is the "cause" defended?

What duty words are used? (should, ought, must) What defense words? (save, protect, help) What other needs the defending? (the nation, the people, the workers, the poor, the children, the animals, the environment).

4. What response is sought?

Simply to vote? Or more? (e.g. to join, enlist, work, fight, picket, march, give, donate)

Analysis of form and content is limited. It does not examine truth or deception, accuracy or error, intent or consequences, but it's a useful start. Our ultimate goal? Knowledge, understanding, insight, tolerance, and perhaps even compassion.

Moral Superiority: A Common Pattern

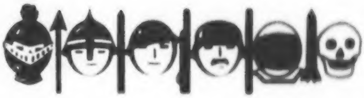
—from *The Pep Talk*

Nothing so pleases one's own advocates nor so infuriates the opposition as the claim to moral superiority. Because joining in a "cause" so favorably affects the self-image, advocates often feel very noble and self-righteous. Sometimes this is expressed very explicitly as when we hear people using military-religious metaphors ("Onward Christian Soldiers"). More frequently, this God-on-our-side attitude is an *implicit, unspoken* assumption. If we were specifically to claim such righteousness, such an explicit statement would often provoke skepticism and counter-claims by putting it so bluntly. But, our *assumptions* are seldom investigated, scrutinized, or subjected to rational "proofs."

When people intensify their own "good," they tend to see themselves as being competent and informed, possessing the "truth" and acting with "good intentions." Sometimes advocates see their opponents as intentionally evil, but, more commonly, they see their opponents as ignorant, misguided, or unintentional dupes of a more powerful "hidden enemy." Variations and synonyms are common, but the advocate's attitude can be expressed in one basic sentence: **"We are informed and good; they are ignorant and evil."**

Left-wingers often view their opponents as "pawns" or "tools" of the rich (Big Business, capitalists, the Military-Industrial-Complex, Swiss bankers, cartels, corporations, conglomerates, Texas oil millionaires, the Establishment, organized religion, etc.). Right-wingers often view their opponents as "dupes" of the commies (creeping socialism, the international communist conspiracy, etc.) or agents of the devil. Zealots are not confined to any particular political ideology. Perhaps the common denominator is the need for "being right" which contributes to a polarized good guys/bad guys mentality.

WAR PROPAGANDA



Words are weapons in warfare. Words affect how people think about themselves and others. War is probably the time of the greatest language manipulation, when people are most likely to deceive others, least able to negotiate, and are under the most intense emotional stress — of fear and hatred — with the greatest real dangers of loss, death, and destruction.

"**Propaganda**" is often used as a general attack word to label any claims or charges from opponents, rivals, or critics. Here, however, two terms are used with specific meanings: **War propaganda**, here refers to persuasion targeted at an internal audience: to bond one's own group, to build morale (a belief in "being right" and in "being able"), to get people to agree and to get involved, to silence internal opposition, and to direct action. **Psychological warfare**, here refers to persuasion designed to demoralize or terrorize an external audience.

Both kinds of persuasion pose a great danger today. Unlike all previous eras, TV now gives persuaders quick access to huge audiences, and powerful new weapons are rather easily available to nations, small groups, and individuals. During 40 years of "peace" (1945-1985), 20 million people were killed in "small" wars: conflicts about dominance, money, territory, ethnic and religious issues — all of which were "justified" by words.

War propaganda can be deliberately manipulated by professional persuaders (a "thermostat effect" calculated to heat up or cool a crisis), but, once started, sometimes it can get totally out of control (a "wildfire effect") with unpredictable results. Certain beliefs and attitudes, emotions and feelings, can rather easily lead to seriously harmful actions. Many people are unstable, angry at real or imagined problems.

If our goals are to resolve conflicts, to lessen tensions, to promote peace, then it helps if we understand how language has often been used in warfare. From observation — and history — consider this basic premise: **People intensify their own "good" and downplay their own "bad"; and, in aggression, people intensify others' "bad" and downplay others' "good."**

Applied to the war propaganda of any nation or group, these concepts are useful to sort out (as in the paragraphs below) and analyze common predictable patterns in form and content.

Intensify Own "Good"

All people **claim virtue** and **seek justice**. Persuaders often repeat key themes: (1) to justify the Cause ("Our nation, our leader, our policies, our actions are right and just"); (2) to bond the group together (themes of unity, loyalty, pride); (3) to focus energy for action (join, work, fight). Words are used to resolve the will, to stir the feelings, to trigger action. Basically, words tell us what to believe, feel, and do.

Such ideas can be expressed in direct explicit claims (as in "glittering generalities" or praise words) or indirect suggestions by means of words, images, music, and other nonverbals associated with things already liked by the intended audience. Stories (narratives — including rumors, books, movies) present heroes as role models for us to imitate their virtues (bravery, endurance, loyalty) and their actions (fighting hard, working, obeying orders).

Rhetoric of the **Haves** (established governments: e.g. strong rivals such as USA/USSR) stresses **defense/protection** of what they have: fear is the key emotion, loss is the threat.

Rhetoric of the **Have-Nots** (the poor, the dispossessed; e.g. revolutionaries, "terrorists") stresses **change/relief**: anger is the key emotion, continued deprivation is the threat.

Downplay Own "Bad"

Omission is the primary way people downplay their own "bad." Governments can suppress, conceal, hide, or cover-up their "bad" (errors, crimes, problems, weaknesses, or any unfavorable information) by means of secrecy, censorship, or controls to ban the press or internal critics — silencing, eliminating, or "disappearing" the opposition. Degree of omission varies: even in peace, some societies are very "closed," others relatively open.

Denials may include both deliberate lying and also self-deceptive wishful thinking, alibis, and excuses. People often try to downplay the bad by a kind of a "word magic" denying that something is, is bad, is not that bad, or denying responsibility("I didn't do it") or intent ("I didn't mean it").

Euphemisms are common — "softer words" which lessen, sweeten, minimize, understate, blur, or obscure the "bad."

Confusion can mask or hide problems, causing a smokescreen effect. In language, confusion can be caused by carelessness, errors, ambiguity, vagueness, unfamiliar words, contradictions, circumlocutions, frequent changes or variations, or anything which can distract, confuse, or overload the audience.

Intensify Others' "Bad"

Verbal aggression, words used to stir emotions (anger, disgust, fear) to incite people to hate others, is often the most intense form of war propaganda. Everyone has predictable fears about death, destruction, loss of possessions, territory, or freedom. Persuaders, on either side, can intensify such fears in order to excite, bond, and direct their own group to action (fight, work, revenge).

In war, expect intense (1) "**name-calling**" (invectives, attack words)and images associating or depicting the enemy as diabolical or inhuman — a savage, animal, monster; (2) "**horror stories**" (narratives — including rumors, books, movies) showing the enemy's evil deeds, atrocities, and bloody victims — stimulating hatred and righteous anger to seek revenge. In war, all armies commit atrocities, yet people tend to believe the worst about their enemies — even a "big lie" if often repeated.

Urgency and danger are intensified by **warnings** using extremist language of "ultimates" (Doomsday, slavery): the greater the threat, the greater the need for a war, or a big military budget.

Downplay Others' "Good"

Neglect is the primary way people downplay others' "good." Some people are egocentric and ethnocentric — simply disregard, ignore, lack concern for, have an aversion toward other groups, strangers, or foreigners. In war, people often know very little about their opponents' culture, history, customs, beliefs, or family life. Warring nations frequently ban the music, art, literature, or any favorable aspect of their opponents.

Intolerance. People often deny (block out, won't listen to) any contrary ideas, opinions, or beliefs. They often won't consider the possible "rightness" of their opponents' cause, of their legitimate needs and wants, or genuine fears and grievances.

Disrespect. Words and attitudes, which are patronizing, condescending toward others, treating others as less than equal, or less than human (including humor - mockery, ridicule, sarcasm), are meant to belittle, degrade, or insult others.

Abstractions. It's easier to kill "things" than to kill human beings: mothers, fathers, or children. In war, language often de-personalizes and de-humanizes others. When language becomes more abstract and general (including numbers, statistics, "body counts"), people become less able to "see" (to visualize, to comprehend) the concrete details, or the specific individuals.

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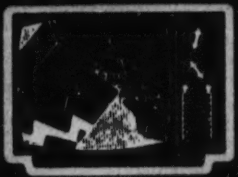
Are ads worth all this attention?

No, but your mind is.

If you can better learn how to analyze things, to recognize patterns, to sort out incoming information, to see the parts, the processes, the structure, the relationships within things so common in your everyday environment, then it's worth your effort.

After all, you'll continue to see thousands of ads in the future. If you can use them to your own advantage, to help you become a better analyst and a better composer, then it's worth your time and attention.

from the Introduction



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